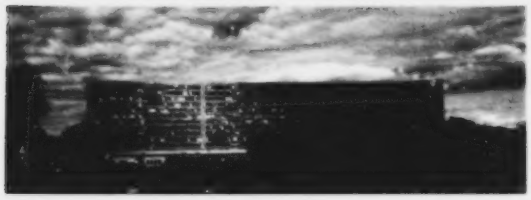
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL



ACTIVITIES OF THE ILO 1996-97

INTERNATIONAL
LABOUR
CONFERENCE
86th Session 1998

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
GENEVA

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Introduction

The Governing Body and the International Labour Conference have decided that the essential missions of the ILO are to serve as —

- a focal point for the preparation and application of standards relating to workers' rights;
- a source of technical services to all its constituents; and
- an authoritative centre of excellence and reference in the field of employment and labour.

This report describes ILO action undertaken during the 1996-97 biennium in response to these missions. It demonstrates a vigorous effort to improve the Organization's relevance, impact and visibility.

The 1996-97 biennium started in difficult financial circumstances, and a variety of austerity measures had to be implemented. These financial problems followed several biennia of budgetary uncertainty and restraint, coupled with increasing demands for the ILO's services. While some activities had to be eliminated and many were implemented with reduced resources, the ILO's dedicated staff have nonetheless accomplished a great deal.

The ILO's activities fall under three priority objectives: supporting democracy and fundamental workers' rights, including the wider observance of international labour standards; promoting employment and reducing poverty; and protecting working people. The first three chapters of this report summarize a wide range of ILO activities to assist constituents in member States in advancing towards these objectives. Details are given of research work, of ILO publications, and of technical advisory services to assist ministries of labour and other public authorities, as well as employers' and workers' organizations. Chapter 4 concerns the activities of the International Institute for Labour Studies and the ILO's Turin Centre in relation to the same objectives.

Chapter 5 describes the technical activities of the ILO in the field, including in particular the work of the 14 multidisciplinary teams in operation in five regions. The sixth and last chapter relates to service and support activities in the Office. These activities include personnel and financial administration, computer systems, press relations, the library and other services.

This report also contains a number of annexes, covering action taken on resolutions adopted by the International Labour Conference, appropriations and expenditure for the biennium (for the first time), technical cooperation expenditure, meetings and publications.

The Internet version of this report provides hyperlinks giving the reader access to the full texts of a wide range of ILO research reports, working papers, documents prepared for meetings and training materials, as well as to summaries of all sales publications. This innovation transforms the report into an instrument for the dissemination of information about ILO action as well as a source of ILO data and analysis on current issues in the world of work.

In order to have their full impact, the activities described in this report depend on the follow-up action of governments, employers and workers and their organizations, and the wider public. I count on readers of this report — including its new electronic audience — to make full use of the ILO's efforts in the pursuit of social justice.

23 March 1998 Michel HANSENNE

The ILO and the Internet

The Internet offers the ILO a powerful tool for the dissemination of a broad range of labour-related information, not only to its tripartite constituents, but also to government agencies other than ministries of labour and a wide variety of national and international NGOs, academic institutions and scholars, as well as the public at large. The ILO opened its home page on the Internet early in 1996 (address ***http://www.ilo.org***), and with each passing month more information is being made available by this means. To take a few examples: by the end of 1997 most of the major bibliographical databases produced at ILO headquarters were accessible through the Internet; the texts of the ILO Constitution, international labour standards, the reports of the Director-General to the Conference and to regional meetings, and Governing Body documents are systematically being made available; and full information is now provided on the Internet concerning all ILO publications.

Article 10 of the ILO Constitution states that:

> The functions of the International Labour Office shall include the collection and distribution of information on all subjects relating to the international adjustment of conditions of industrial life and labour ... .

In accordance with the ILO's policy to diffuse the maximum possible amount of information by means of the Internet, the present report is being made available in full text on the Internet, and hyperlinks will enable the reader to access most of the documents mentioned in the notes at the end of each chapter. These hyperlinks will lead to the full texts of non-sales publications (i.e. a wide range of working papers, monographs, technical memoranda and manuals) and to summaries of the contents of publications available for sale. More information is thus being made available to ILO constituents and to the general public than ever before in the ILO's history.

1

Promoting democracy and human rights

The unique feature of the ILO is its tripartism. When the ILO was first established in 1919, in the aftermath of the First World War, its founders determined that it should be tripartite in the belief that social justice, and with it universal and lasting peace, could only be achieved with the involvement of the social partners at all stages. Ever since, it has been the fundamental role of the ILO to promote and facilitate social dialogue and negotiation at all levels. In this way, the ILO makes an important contribution to promoting democracy, which is also strengthened by its action to secure the wider observance of work-related rights, especially those concerning freedom of association.

Although the promotion of democracy and human rights is integral to all the ILO's activities, this chapter singles out the work during the biennium that was of most immediate relevance to the achievement of these important objectives. These include the activities most directly related to improving the implementation of international labour standards in national law and practice and promoting tripartite processes and institutions. The chapter also covers activities to strengthen labour administration systems, through which labour law and policies are implemented. It reports on the assistance provided to develop and strengthen representative organizations of employers and workers, and to maintain close relations with them. Finally, it describes the activities of the ILO to promote social dialogue at the international level on the problems and trends in specific sectors, particularly through the organization of sectoral meetings.

International labour standards and human rights

As the only international organization that is tripartite in structure, the ILO places dialogue between representatives of governments, employers and workers at the centre of all its activities. This is nowhere more evident than in the adoption of the international labour standards which form the backbone of the Organization's work. Developed through a process of consultation and debate between the ILO's tripartite constituents, these standards cover a broad spectrum of work-related issues, ranging from social security and occupational health and safety to basic workers' rights, such as the abolition of forced and child labour, equality and freedom of association. During the biennium, 222 new ratifications of Conventions were registered, bringing the total number of ratifications to 6,477 by 31 December 1997. This number gives some indication of the extent to which the rights embodied in these standards are reflected in national law and practice.

The ILO's fundamental Conventions

The basic human rights for which the ILO is competent are set out in seven fundamental Conventions covering the abolition of forced and child labour, equality of rights and freedom of association. With the exception of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), these fundamental instruments are amongst the most highly ratified of all ILO Conventions.

New standards adopted during the biennium:

— Home Work Convention (No. 177) and Recommendation (No. 184), 1996;
— Labour Inspection (Seafarers) Convention (No. 178) and Recommendation (No. 185), 1996;
— Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention (No. 179) and Recommendation (No. 186), 1996;
— Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention (No. 180) and Seafarers' Wages, Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Recommendation (No. 187), 1996;
— Protocol of 1996 to the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 147);
— Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and Recommendation (No. 188), 1997.

As stated in the previous activities report,[1] following the World Summit for Social Development in March 1995, and in response to the 1994 Conference resolution concerning the 75th anniversary of the ILO and its future orientation, the Director-General launched a campaign for the further ratification of these important instruments. Letters were dispatched to member States for this purpose and a series of tripartite national seminars on the ratification of the fundamental Conventions were held in various countries, including China, Mauritius, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

The campaign has so far met with significant success, with the registration of 77 additional ratifications of these instruments by the end of 1997. By 31 December 1997, the ILO had registered a combined total of 853 ratifications of its seven fundamental Conventions. To arrive at universal ratification of these Conventions, another 356 ratifications would still need to be registered. As of 31 December 1997, a total of 116 member States had ratified five or more of these Conventions, and 34 countries had ratified them all. In contrast, 22 countries had ratified two or fewer of the fundamental Conventions, while only five member States still had not ratified any of them.

In November 1997, the Governing Body decided to place on the agenda of the International Labour Conference in 1998 an item relating to the consideration of a possible ILO Declaration on workers' fundamental rights.

Since the beginning of the Director-General's campaign in 1995, the following **ratifications (or confirmations of previous obligations) of the ILO's seven fundamental Conventions** have been registered:

- **forced labour**: *Convention No. 29*: Botswana, El Salvador, Estonia, Georgia, South Africa, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Uruguay and Uzbekistan; *Convention No. 105*: Albania, Belarus, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Mauritania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan;
- **freedom of association**: *Convention No. 87*: Botswana, Republic of Moldova, Mozambique, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan and Zambia; *Convention No. 98*: Botswana, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Mozambique, Nepal, South Africa, Suriname, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam and Zambia;
- **equality of opportunity and treatment**: *Convention No. 100*: Botswana, Estonia, Georgia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam; *Convention No. 111*: Albania, Botswana, El Salvador, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, South Africa, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam;
- **minimum age**: *Convention No. 138*: Argentina, Bolivia, Botswana, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Georgia, Malaysia, Nepal, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Tunisia.

The Office has also been informed that the procedures for the ratification of these Conventions have been initiated or are near completion in a number of other member States.

Human rights

The ILO also works towards the improved observance of the basic human rights for which it has special competence by encouraging other agencies in the United Nations system, as well as the international financial institutions, to promote the ILO's principles and values in their own work. This objective is pursued through high-level contacts with the organizations concerned, the participation of the ILO in the human rights work of the United Nations and other organizations, and the provision of information and advice on ILO standards and the results of ILO tripartite discussions.

As part of this work, in September 1996, the ILO held consultations with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) concerning the repatriation of large numbers of refugees to a situation of forced labour in Myanmar. In February 1997, a briefing was organized for the representatives of Geneva missions who would be attending the next session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The briefing drew the attention of representatives from over 80 national missions to the cases before the Commission which related to the human rights for which the ILO is especially competent, such as freedom of association, forced and child labour, discrimination and the rights of migrant workers and indigenous and tribal peoples. This kind of briefing will be repeated.

Indications during the biennium of **a more coordinated approach among United Nations agencies and international financial institutions for the promotion of ILO principles and values** included:

- the growing importance attached by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to human rights questions and social issues, as reflected, for example, in the policy on child labour adopted by the World Bank and the recognition by the World Bank President in his address to the International Labour Conference in 1997 that sound social policies are integral to sound economic policies;
- the reaffirmation in the Ministerial Declaration of the World Trade Organization adopted in Singapore in 1996 of the commitment to observe core labour standards, and recognition of the ILO as the competent body to set and deal with these standards; and
- the agreement between the Director-General of the ILO and the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to increase cooperation between the two agencies in areas of mutual concern, including training on human rights issues at the national level and greater exchange of information between their supervisory and other bodies.

Revision of existing standards

Recognizing that some of the ILO's earlier instruments are no longer adapted to the requirements of a rapidly changing world, a Governing Body Working Party on Policy regarding the Revision of Standards has undertaken a systematic examination of the standards adopted before 1985. The aim of this process is to modernize and strengthen the standard-setting system, without reducing the protection afforded to workers through ratified Conventions.

The recommendations of the Working Party, which have been accepted by the Governing Body, include the revision of over ten Conventions, activities to promote the ratification of revised Conventions and the "shelving" of over 25 Conventions. Moreover, on the recommendation of the Working Party the 85th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1997 adopted an amendment to the ILO Constitution allowing for the abrogation of a Convention "if it appears that the Convention has lost its purpose or that it no longer makes

In this context, the term "**shelving**" means:
- the ratification of shelved Conventions is no longer encouraged;
- their publication in Office documents and studies is to be discontinued;
- detailed reports will no longer normally be requested on them by the Office for the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations.

However:
- the right is retained to invoke their provisions in relation to representations and complaints under articles 24 and 26 of the Constitution;
- employers' and workers' representatives may still make comments on them in accordance with the regular supervisory procedure; and
- shelving has no impact on the status of the Conventions in the legal systems of member States which have ratified them.

a useful contribution to attaining the objectives of the Organization". This constitutional amendment has been submitted for ratification to the competent authorities of member States. The amendment will come into force when it has been ratified or accepted by two-thirds of the Members of the Organization.

This focus on the revision of existing standards was complemented by an initiative to improve the preparation of future international labour standards. In particular, the Office formally consulted constituents concerning the issues that they wished to see discussed by the Conference in coming years with a view to the adoption of new standards. In November 1997, the Governing Body considered the suggestions made by ILO constituents and prepared a shortlist of possible agenda items for the Conference in the year 2000.

The supervisory system

The ILO's supervisory system is an important aspect of its activities to achieve broader acceptance and observance of its principles and standards. This system centres around a continuing dialogue with member States, based on the work of the independent Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, the discussions of the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards and the cases brought before the Governing Body Committee on Freedom of Association.

There are good indications that progress is being made in the observance of ILO principles and standards by many countries throughout the world. In its two sessions during the biennium, the Committee of Experts expressed satisfaction at the measures taken in 57 cases to make the necessary changes in national law or practice, in accordance with its comments. It also noted many cases in which progress had been achieved towards a fuller application of ratified Conventions and the considerable efforts made by several governments to submit the instruments adopted by the Conference to the competent national authorities for ratification.

Cases of progress are, of course, only one aspect of the situation. Many problems are also brought to light by the Committee of Experts in relation to the application of ratified Conventions. Some of the most serious cases are examined each year by the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards. In particular, during the biennium, the Conference Committee expressed great concern that there had been continued failure over several years to eliminate serious discrepancies in the application of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), by Myanmar and Sudan, and of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), by Myanmar and Nigeria.

Cases in respect of which **the Committee of Experts was able to express satisfaction** during the biennium included:

- the introduction of the possibility of trade union pluralism in *Albania, Azerbaijan, Chad, Gabon, Latvia, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe* and *Slovakia;*
- improved observance of the right of workers' organizations to organize their activities and formulate their programmes in *Chad, Niger, Panama* and *Seychelles;*
- broader recognition of the right to strike in *Australia, Azerbaijan, Chad, Gabon* and *Latvia;*
- the strengthening of protection against acts of anti-union discrimination in *Austria, Gabon, Greece* and the *United Kingdom;*
- the possibility for public sector workers' organizations to take part in collective bargaining in *Ethiopia* and *Greece;*
- the adoption of stricter rules governing the hours of work of public bus drivers in *Peru;*
- fuller application of the Conventions on the elimination of forced labour in *Honduras, Tunisia, Uganda, Venezuela* and *Zambia;*
- improved application of the Conventions on minimum age in *Colombia, Israel, Malta* and *Singapore;*
- better application of the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers in *Brazil;*
- the adoption of measures against sexual harassment in *India;*
- the adoption of legislation establishing or improving guarantees of equal remuneration for work of equal value for men and women workers in *Côte d'Ivoire, Israel* and *Niger;*
- a narrowing of the wage differentials between men and women in Cyprus; and
- improved protection of workers' wages in *Chad* and *Venezuela*.

The case of the observance of Convention No. 29 by Myanmar was also raised in a complaint submitted under article 26 of the Constitution by 25 Worker delegates to the Conference in 1996. The Governing Body established a Commission of Inquiry, which met in June and November 1997 to examine the case, reach conclusions and make the appropriate recommendations. During the biennium, the representatives of employers and workers continued to make use of the procedure envisaged under article 24 of the Constitution to submit cases of alleged non-observance of ratified Conventions for examination by the Governing Body. A further 11 representations were made under this procedure during the course of 1996-97, with conclusions and recommendations being approved by the Governing Body in a total of 17 such cases.

In its General Survey, the Committee of Experts focuses its attention on the difficulties experienced in the implementation of specific standards and the prospects for their further ratification. The first General Survey in the biennium was on labour administration.[2] In its survey, the Committee of Experts noted that the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), had only been ratified by 39 member States, the most recent being the United States in 1995 and Namibia in 1996. However, several governments informed the Committee that they envisaged ratifying the Convention. In this respect, the Committee noted that a number of issues raised by member States in relation to the ratification of the Convention did not seem to constitute impediments to ratification. Rather than imposing an obligation on ratifying States to produce a specific result, the Convention required them to use their best endeavours to improve labour administration, taking into account national conditions. The Committee emphasized that the flexibility of the Convention allowed it to take into account a broad spectrum of national situations and conditions. It also drew attention to its value in providing guidance for the preparation of national social and labour policies. The survey centred around the common theme that best practice in labour administration is based on dialogue and cooperation, particularly with the social partners.

Forced labour

In November 1995, the Governing Body decided that the special procedure set out in article 19 of the Constitution for reporting by member States on unratified Conventions should be used regularly for all seven fundamental Conventions. This extended procedure was first applied in 1997 for Conventions Nos. 29 and 105 on the elimination of forced labour, which are among the most widely ratified of the ILO's Conventions. By 31 December 1997, Convention No. 29 had been ratified by 143 and Convention No. 105 by 129 member States. Moreover, four additional ratifications for each Convention are expected soon, while preparations for ratification are under way in several other countries.

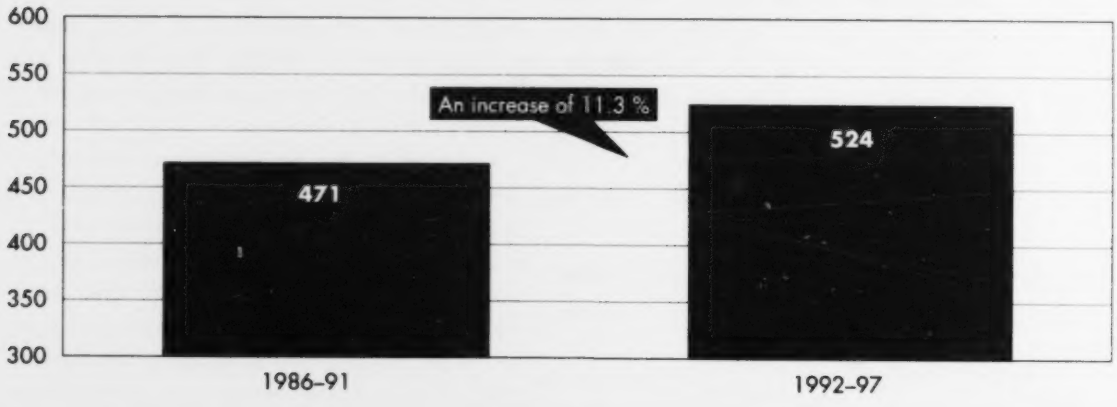
The Committee of Experts pointed to one particular difficulty that has arisen in the application of Convention No. 29 in recent years. Under the terms of Article 2 (2) (c) of the Convention, the term "forced or compulsory labour" does not include "any work or service exacted from any person as a consequence of a conviction in a court of law, provided that the said work or service is carried out under the supervision and control of a public authority and that the said person is not hired to or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations". The difficulty arises in view of both the increase in the number of private firms using prison labour in public prisons and the performance of work in prisons in which the administration has been contracted to private firms. In accordance with the Convention, work or service exacted from any person as a consequence of a conviction in a court of law is exempted from the scope of the Convention only if two conditions are met. These are that "the said work or service is carried out under the supervision and control of a public authority and that the said person is not hired to or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations". In this respect, the Committee reaffirmed its position that "only when performed in conditions approximating a free employment relationship can work by prisoners for private companies be held compatible with the explicit prohibition in Article 2 (2) (c); this necessarily requires the formal consent of the person concerned". The Committee pointed out that "a necessary part of consent is that there must be further guarantees and safeguards covering the essential elements of a free labour relationship, if the employment is to be removed from the scope of Article 2 (2) (c)". It also noted that "in some countries the governments are making progress towards full compliance with the Convention in their administration of privatized prisons by taking measures so that conditions in privatized prisons progressively approach those of free workers".[3]

Freedom of association

The Governing Body Committee on Freedom of Association is the centrepiece of a specialized mechanism through which the tripartite constituents can bring to light cases in which the ILO's principles on freedom of association are not fully observed.

The number of cases brought before the Committee during the biennium gives some indication of the progress that still needs to be made in the application of these crucial basic rights. During the biennium, the Committee arrived at conclusions in around 153 cases concerning 53 countries in all the regions of the world. However, the measures taken by governments in a number of these cases provide an indication of the effectiveness of the system in securing fuller observance of the right to freedom of association.

Figure 1. **Number of cases examined by the Committee on Freedom of Association (1986-97)**



During the biennium, the measures noted by the Committee **to give effect to the principles of freedom of association** included the following:

- the freeing or acquittal of trade unionists in *Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, India* and the *Republic of Korea;*
- the registration of trade union organizations in *Argentina, Bangladesh, Mexico, Pakistan* and the *Philippines;*
- the consultation of organizations of employers and workers in *Burundi;*
- the establishment of labour tribunals in *Guatemala;*
- the reinstatement of dismissed trade unionists in *Congo, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Malaysia, Romania* and *Turkey;*
- progress in the attribution of the assets of central trade union organizations in *Poland;* and
- the re-establishment of collective bargaining in the public sector in *Canada* (Yukon).

Advisory services and legal information

The role of the supervisory system in achieving fuller implementation of ILO principles and standards is closely supported by the provision of practical assistance to constituents, in the form of advisory services, technical assistance and training. To familiarize constituents with the content of ILO standards and the role of the supervisory system in reinforcing their impact, tripartite subregional seminars on international labour standards were held in South America, Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A two-week training course, based on new course material, was held in the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin (Turin Centre) immediately prior to the Conference in 1997 for government officials responsible for reporting on international labour standards, as well as for employers' representatives. Around 20 national and subregional seminars were also held in all regions of the world on standards and procedures relating to freedom of association. Further support at the national level was provided through missions to individual countries and the provision of comments on draft legislation.

An important service provided by the ILO to assist member States and in support of the work of its supervisory bodies is the provision of information on international labour standards and developments in national legislation. Access to this information offers important guidance to member States which are drawing up or revising labour legislation. Two

major tools are being constantly developed and updated for this purpose. The first is ILOLEX, the database of international labour standards. The second is the NATLEX database, covering national legislation, which is constantly being expanded and contains over 45,000 entries, including many full texts of basic labour and social security legislation. These databases are available on CD-ROM and, since March 1997, have been accessible on-line through the International labour standards page on the ILO Web site on the Internet.

The potential of these new information tools to provide guidance to constituents in their work on national labour standards and practices was emphasized in a training programme which familiarized officials in ministries of labour and in employers' and workers' organizations with their use. The training programme included seminars in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Turin Centre, as well as the provision of assistance and information during missions to various countries.

Through the **ILOLEX database**, ILO constituents have on-line access to the full texts of:

- the ILO Constitution;
- ILO Conventions and Recommendations;
- the reports of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations;
- the reports of the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards;
- the reports of the Committee on Freedom of Association;
- the reports of the committees and commissions of inquiry set up to examine representations and complaints;
- ratifications of ILO Conventions (by country);
- the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference;
- interpretations of Conventions and Recommendations published in the *Official Bulletin*;
- the *Handbook of procedures relating to international labour Conventions and Recommendations*;
- the *Digest of decisions and principles of the Freedom of Association Committee*;

and

- the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.

These information activities were supplemented by a number of publications during the biennium. A new compilation of international labour Conventions and Recommendations was published in English, and includes the revised *Handbook of procedures relating to international labour Conventions and Recommendations*, which was also published separately and widely circulated in the ILO's seven official and working languages. The fourth (revised) edition of the *Digest of decisions and principles of the Freedom of Association Committee*[4] was published in English, French and Spanish, and prepared for publication in Arabic, Portuguese and Russian. *ILO law on freedom of association*,[5] first published in Spanish and English in 1995, was issued in French in 1996, with versions also being prepared in Arabic, Chinese, German, Portuguese and Russian.

Labour law and labour relations

In response to the harsh competition in today's globalized markets, many decision-makers are seeking to introduce greater flexibility into economic organization and the utilization of labour. An increasing number of countries are therefore deregulating economic activity and making protective labour legislation more flexible. These developments are taking place against a background of high rates of unemployment in many countries and a profound change in the nature of employment, with full-time stable employment becoming less predominant, as part-time work and more precarious types of employment, including temporary and contract work, become increasingly widespread.

Cases in which **new or revised labour legislation** was adopted following the provision of technical assistance by the Office include:

- *Albania*, where implementing decrees were adopted under the 1995 Labour Code, which was also developed with ILO assistance;
- *Chad, Mozambique* and *Niger*, where a major updating of the labour codes included recognition of trade union pluralism, provisions to promote collective bargaining at the enterprise level, improved protection of workers in terms of health and safety and greater flexibility in recruitment and dismissal;
- *Costa Rica*, where the Labour Code and the Constitution were amended to bring them into conformity with Convention No. 87; and
- *Malawi*, which adopted a new Labour Relations Act considerably strengthening freedom of association and the right to organize in independent unions, establishing dispute settlement machinery, including an industrial relations court, introducing new machinery for collective bargaining at the enterprise and sectoral levels and creating a tripartite labour advisory council.

Against this background, the objective of the ILO is the development of labour legislation that is adapted to the new environment by both safeguarding social protection and being conducive to economic efficiency. Assistance in the achievement of this objective was provided to over 35 countries during the biennium in response to requests from governments for help in the revision of legislation or the development of new laws. In most cases, over the years this assistance leads up to the adoption of new or revised legislation.

To provide constituents with comparative information on one important aspect of labour legislation in a wide range of countries, the Office prepared a compilation of legislation respecting termination of employment at the initiative of the employer.[6] In the form of a digest, it contains comparative tables of legislative provisions in almost 70 member States. It covers sources of law, the scope of the legislation, types of contracts of employment, valid and invalid reasons for dismissal, procedural safeguards, notice requirements, avenues for redress, remedies and, where available, provisions governing collective dismissals.

A regional tripartite seminar on labour law reform was held in Abidjan in June-July 1997, in collaboration with the World Bank, for 12 French-speaking African countries. This meeting, which examined a range of topics, including labour relations, recruitment, dismissal, child labour and maternity protection, provided an opportunity for an exchange of views between the ILO, the World Bank and the social partners in the participating countries. It improved understanding between the ILO and the World Bank on possible areas of convergence and remaining differences of approach. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting emphasize that labour legislation can have a positive impact on economic efficiency by contributing to an improvement in the quality of jobs. The participants added that labour law can provide adequate protection for workers while at the same time taking into account economic performance and enterprise productivity. By creating a balance between the interests of workers and employers, it can promote a climate of trust when applied in a transparent manner. The deliberations of the meeting should help constituents challenge criticisms of labour law and labour market regulation in general, as well as enhancing their understanding of where reforms are justified.[7]

Social dialogue

There is growing recognition that the changes introduced to equip national economies for the new competitive globalized markets can only be successful if they are backed by consensus support, particularly from the social partners. As a result, a growing number of

countries in all regions of the world have been experimenting with different mechanisms for negotiations and consultation on socio-economic policy between the government and employers' and workers' organizations. In countries in transition, tripartite consultation is being adopted as a desirable alternative to the previous authoritarian processes of policy-making. In Latin America, the process has recently acquired a new vigour and has become a prominent feature of labour relations.

The objectives of ILO action in this field are the promotion of social dialogue and the maintenance and enhanced vitality of collective bargaining in globalized economies. This objective is achieved by responding to requests for assistance from constituents and the organization of tripartite seminars to provide information and training in the basic principles of social dialogue. Many of the activities focused on transition countries. During the biennium, tripartite seminars were held in Azerbaijan, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. In some of these countries, these events were among the first tripartite activities at the national level. In the case of Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan, for example, the seminars ended with the signature of a resolution by the parties recognizing and undertaking to promote the principle of tripartism. In the case of the latter two countries and Uzbekistan, these activities were followed up by a tripartite course at the ILO's Turin Centre and study tours. Two regional seminars on social dialogue were also held in Cyprus for Central and Eastern European countries. Technical support was provided to initiate and develop processes of social dialogue in El Salvador and five Andean countries. In many cases, this assistance has led to the establishment of new or revitalized tripartite consultation machinery and the conclusion of tripartite agreements on social and economic policy issues.

The biennium saw **significant progress in social dialogue in a number of Latin American countries**. The roots of this progress lie variously in the follow-up to structural adjustment programmes, the need for worker support to increase competitivity in a context of regional integration and the tripartite consultations initiated by the ILO for the preparation of Country Objectives Statements. Illustrations of improved social dialogue include:

- *Bolivia*, where a process of tripartite consultation has been resumed, focusing on the revision of labour legislation;
- *Colombia*, where, although the Social Pact drawn up in 1995 remains unsigned, a tripartite national commission is working on follow-up to the Pact, with ILO assistance;
- *Ecuador*, where a partial revision of the Labour Code, and in particular its provisions on freedom of association, was the product of extensive tripartite consultation carried out with the support of the ILO; and
- *Venezuela*, where a tripartite agreement on the revision of the Labour Code, particularly in the areas of social security and severance pay, makes special reference to the provision of ILO technical assistance.

Support for this work was provided in the form of a research project on negotiations covering the introduction of labour market flexibility measures. Based on an examination of experience in this respect in a good number of industrialized and developing countries, an assessment was made of the respective importance, for the introduction of labour flexibility, of legislation, collective bargaining, work rules, individual contracts and unilateral action by employers. Recent experience in the "negotiated" introduction of flexibility was reviewed and factors were identified which enhance the role of collective bargaining in the adoption of flexibility measures that are beneficial to both enterprises and their employees.

One of the fundamental concerns of the social partners, particularly in collective bargaining processes, is remuneration. The debate on the relative advantages and disadvantages of minimum

Promoting social dialogue in Africa

In their concern to respond effectively to the devaluation of their currency, African countries in the CFA franc zone recognized the need for national tripartite cooperation to reach consensus on important economic and social issues, including the implementation of structural adjustment programmes. A pilot project was therefore carried out during the biennium in several French-speaking African countries on the formulation and implementation of national economic and social policy through social dialogue.

Based on studies and meetings in each country, assessments were made of national experience and problems in the field of tripartite dialogue. In the case of *Burkina Faso*, the recommendations made included extending the competence of the Consultative Labour Commission, setting up a permanent secretariat for the Commission and strengthening the bargaining capacity of the social partners. To achieve the aim of regular and permanent tripartite consultations in *Benin*, it was recommended that the permanent secretariat to the National Labour Council be strengthened through the provision of an appropriate budget, regular economic and social information and the training of its members in collective bargaining. The social partners in these countries benefited from the opportunity to exchange experience with a high-level tripartite delegation from Belgium on the impact of regional integration on national-level social dialogue.

Following the implementation of the project, a Decree was adopted in Benin on the creation and scope of a financially reinforced tripartite National Labour Council. As a result, tripartite consultations and meetings are now held regularly in the Council and a permanent secretariat is being created. Work is still continuing in Burkina Faso on the strengthening of the Consultative Labour Commission and the establishment of a permanent secretariat.

In view of the success of the pilot project, similar activities are now being undertaken in *Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Mali, Senegal* and the *five Portuguese-speaking African countries*. Other African countries have also expressed interest in receiving similar assistance from the Office.

wage fixing continues, as illustrated by the renewed consideration in several countries of statutory minimum wages to protect the lowest paid. Member States continue to experiment with different types of pay systems in an effort to achieve the desired flexibility and linkages with performance, without damaging the fabric of basic protection for workers' income.

The objective of ILO action in this respect is the formulation and effective application of sound wage policies and systems that are conducive to greater social equity and economic efficiency. One key concern of constituents in this connection is to strike a balance between the aspects of pay determination that are best left to employers and workers, and those that would benefit from government initiatives. The assistance provided to constituents to help them achieve this objective included training courses at the Turin Centre and the International Institute for Labour Studies, as well as activities at the national and subregional levels. Particular attention was given in this respect to endeavouring to improve pay determination and render pay systems more effective in the public sector, while applying equity principles, such as equal pay for work of equal value. Technical advice and comparative information were provided to the tripartite constituents and parliamentarians in Brazil on profit-sharing and financial participation, with particular reference to their legal regulation. In a follow-up activity covering the hotel and tourism sector in Senegal, a seminar for sectoral negotiators explored ways of revising the job, grade and pay structure set out in the collective agreement covering the sector. National tripartite meetings on minimum wage fixing were held in Nepal and Thailand. The first considered the feasibility of minimum wages for agricultural workers, while the second reviewed the current national system of minimum wage fixing. The Office also organized a meeting for member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on pay policy, which addressed minimum wage and enterprise pay policies.

Countries in which progress in the **negotiation of remuneration systems** occurred during the biennium included:

- *Cuba*, where a meeting held to address the issues of minimum wage determination, public sector pay and linking pay and performance constituted an initial step in the revision of the former centralized pay determination system — the outcome of the meeting provided a basis for the work of the tripartite national task force on wage reform, which is in its early stages; and
- *Madagascar*, where technical advisory services helped the social partners come together and adjust minimum wages through a collective agreement for the first time — the agreement was then ratified by the Government, giving it force of law.

The structural adjustment measures that are being adopted in many countries, and particularly in countries in transition, which often involve an erosion of workers' protection and a widening of income gaps, have in many cases led to a sharp increase in the number of labour disputes, outbreaks of strikes and other forms of industrial action. The absence of adequate dispute settlement mechanisms often prevents the effective solution of these disputes and amplifies their negative effects on the national economy and social cohesion. In response to requests for technical assistance, the Office helped in the establishment of machinery for the settlement of labour disputes in several countries, including China, Venezuela and Ukraine. Following the provision of technical advice and the holding of a tripartite workshop, the Government of China is now in the early stages of preparing legislation on the settlement of labour disputes. In Venezuela, the issue has been covered by several meetings between the Ministry of Labour and the social partners.

South Africa is moving away from its tradition of adversarial labour relations towards social partnership based on tripartism, consultation, transparency and the promotion of workplace democracy. The South African Labour Relations Act of 1995, which came into force in November 1996, calls for the establishment of a Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) to prevent and settle disputes. After assisting in the development of the law, the ILO carried out a project to help launch the CCMA and undertake training and capacity-building activities for the staff of the CCMA, its part-time commissioners and the social partners.

The CCMA has been successfully installed and provides high-quality, expeditious services for the prevention and resolution of individual and collective labour disputes. From November 1996 to June 1997, for instance, it conciliated over 10,000 disputes and resolved 68 per cent of them, a rate that compares favourably with international best practice.

Workers' protection in multinational enterprises and export processing zones (EPZs)

Guidelines concerning the observance of ILO principles by multinational enterprises are contained in the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy. The Declaration was adopted by the Governing Body in 1977 and remains the only text endorsed by an international organization concerning the labour and social aspects of the activities of multinational enterprises. Among the ILO's activities to achieve its objective of wider observance of the principles set out in the Declaration, a central role is played by its surveys on the effect given to the Declaration, the sixth of which was completed during the biennium.

Recent years have seen indications of increasingly widespread concern and acceptance that multinational enterprises should apply social policies and labour practices that are in line with the principles of the Tripartite Declaration. These include a number of voluntary codes of conduct adopted by certain governments,

The **Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy**, adopted by the Governing Body in 1977, is a voluntary instrument with five major sections:

- the *first*, concerning general policies, urges respect for national sovereignty, the laws and policy objectives of the host country, equality of treatment between MNEs and national enterprises and tripartite consultation and cooperation;
- the *second* calls on MNEs to generate and expand opportunities for stable and secure employment, use appropriate technologies and develop structural linkages in the economy of the host country;
- the *third* focuses on the training, retraining and promotion of workers of all categories;
- the *fourth* recommends the provision of favourable wage rates, benefits and conditions of work, with special emphasis on occupational safety and health; and
- the *fifth* urges respect for freedom of association, the right to organize and collective bargaining.

employers' organizations and multinational enterprises. The Governing Body Working Group which examined the findings of the survey agreed that many positive steps had been taken in setting policies that take into account the respective concerns of the tripartite partners on economic and social issues. It also found that multinational enterprises generally have a positive impact on the economies of host countries and that they play an important role in training and the introduction and use of advanced technologies and modern management practices. In general, pay, benefits, conditions of work and safety standards in multinational enterprises compare favourably with, and often exceed those of, comparable local enterprises. However, there are instances in which the activities of multinational enterprises have caused difficulties, particularly as regards job security, the right to organize, collective bargaining and labour-management consultations. Certain actions by multinational enterprises have also resulted in lay-offs and aggravated unemployment.

Promotional activities and advisory services to encourage observance of the principles contained in the Declaration included the holding of an African regional workshop in South Africa in July 1996 for trade union leaders from 14 African countries, as well as seminars on multinational enterprises for workers' representatives from Asia and the Pacific. Research in support of these activities reviewed the economic and social impact of increased levels of foreign direct investment in the Philippines [8] and Bangladesh,[9] as well as in the telecommunications sector,[10] for women workers in retailing [11] and in the courier service industry.[12]

In addition to the corporate codes adopted in recent years, a number of **national codes of practice for multinational enterprises** have also been developed, including:

- *Actions expected of enterprises in the development of their business activities overseas*, issued by the Government of *Japan* in 1989 (and revised in 1992);
- *Model business principles*, adopted in 1995 by the Government of the *United States* after extensive consultations with the representatives of business and labour; and
- *Memorandum of social understanding*, signed in 1997 by the Government of the *Philippines* and organizations representing employers and workers.

One of the measures adopted increasingly commonly by member States to attract foreign investment is the establishment of export processing zones (EPZs) in which special facilities are offered to inward investors. These include fiscal incentives and, in some cases, exemption from the application of protective labour legislation and the principles of labour relations. Although well-planned and efficient EPZs contribute to economic development and the creation of employment, they can give rise to labour and social problems. The objective of ILO activities in this connection is better observance of international labour standards and the development of tripartite machinery in EPZs, so as to

The ILO provided support and technical advisory services leading up to the signature of the *Memorandum* in the Philippines, which covers all the areas dealt with by the Tripartite Declaration, as well as sexual harassment, environmental protection and child labour. Other Governments, including those of *Indonesia* and *Viet Nam*, as well as the Asian trade union movement, have since requested ILO assistance for the conclusion of similar instruments.

The **preliminary findings of the action programme**, which will be discussed at an international tripartite meeting in 1998, suggest that:

- although the incentives offered to investors in EPZs tend to be broadly targeted at labour-intensive industries in general, host countries can benefit more by rewarding policies and practices that are in the longer-term interests of the national economy, including sound human resources development, the sharing of technology and the development of backward and forward linkages with local enterprises;
- greater emphasis on infrastructure planning for the requirements, not only of the EPZs themselves, but also of the workforce, including appropriate transport and housing, is important in improving the living conditions of workers in EPZs, their health and motivation; and
- cutting-edge export-oriented enterprises, which account for a large proportion of EPZ operators, increasingly need to adopt positive labour relations systems and human resources development strategies if they are to remain competitive under conditions of greater global competition.

create an industrial relations climate that attracts investment and an operational environment that is beneficial to all concerned.

An action programme on labour and social issues in EPZs was undertaken to identify factors, and particularly the role of social and labour issues, which affect the performance of these zones. Around 100 enterprises were visited for this purpose, mainly in the textile, clothing, footwear, electrical and electronics sectors. These enterprises ranged from local family-run SMEs to giant multinationals, supported by both local and foreign investment. The information obtained led to the development and publication of conclusions and recommendations on the most innovative practices adopted by government agencies, employers and workers in EPZs.[13]

Based on these findings, training materials were developed on the strengthening of labour relations and human resources management,[14] improving the situation of women workers [15] and organizing workers in EPZs.[16] The findings of the action programme were discussed at subregional tripartite meetings held in the Caribbean and Central America towards the end of 1997. The resulting compilation of information, which is one of the most comprehensive in the world on EPZs, is being made available through the Internet. The training products will be tested in early 1998, and an international tripartite meeting is scheduled for September 1998 to review the work of the action programme and, if appropriate, adopt guidelines on social and labour issues in EPZs.

Labour administration

As the administrative arm of governments for the implementation of labour policy, the labour administration systems in member States are having to respond to the many rapid changes that are taking place in the world of work, often with limited financial and human resources. In a context in which traditional systems of employment and worker protection are being eroded in many countries, they are having to cope with the rapidly changing skill requirements of employers, as well as large numbers of jobseekers who have no work experience, or who have been made redundant following restructuring measures and whose experience is not necessarily adapted to the current labour market situation. The risks faced by workers in their jobs are also changing rapidly as new technologies and substances are

introduced. The task of labour administrations is particularly difficult in countries applying structural adjustment programmes and in transition countries, where labour administrations are having to adjust to the market economy and democratization.

In a number of industrialized countries, approaches are emerging which are beginning to offer effective responses to these challenges. These often involve the development of the role of the social partners with, for example, workers' representatives playing a more participative and proactive role through such bodies as occupational safety and health committees. They also bring about greater empowerment of jobseekers by fostering a more dynamic attitude to their employment situation. Rather than being directed to specific vacancies, the unemployed are encouraged to develop work, career or training plans and are given the means, such as access to computer terminals in job centres, to search for the vacancies that are of interest to them. Placing vacancies on the Internet has also proven to be an effective way of providing a wide range of geographically varied job offers. But the labour administrations in many countries are far from being in a position to adopt such innovative responses and require assistance with many of the basic functions of labour administration.

The objective of ILO activities in this respect is the strengthening of the capacity of labour administrations to design and implement effective policies for the protection of workers and the efficient functioning of labour markets. With the development of the Active Partnership Policy, there has been a trend over the past two biennia for member States to request more wide-ranging assistance, covering the whole gamut of services and activities of labour administration systems, rather than single operational services, such as labour inspection and employment services. The assistance provided to constituents included a series of "audits" of labour administration systems. These exercises were carried out in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guinea and Zimbabwe towards the end of the biennium. The recommendations delivered as a result of the audits covered a number of aspects of labour administration systems, including:

- the need for regular consultation with the social partners;
- ways of improving the organization of the human and material resources of the labour administration throughout the national territory;
- the provision of better information to officials working outside the capital city;
- the establishment of better coordination between ministries (such as the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Training);
- the identification of minimum resource levels for the effective functioning of the system; and
- the design and implementation of a realistic employment policy.

The audits also identified areas in which the Office could provide direct assistance to strengthen the labour administrations in the five countries concerned.

Further support was provided to member States in the form of technical advisory services in Brazil, Chile, Niger and Yemen, and national technical cooperation projects in Azerbaijan and Bulgaria. The assistance provided to the Baltic States and Slovakia during the biennium produced some encouraging results. Through national seminars, training and policy advice, the focus in these countries was widened from labour inspection and safety and health issues, for example, to broader employment policy issues. A tripartite seminar was also held in

The **recommendations of a tripartite mission** were accepted by the Government of *Panama*, where a Presidential Decree concerning the national labour administration system was adopted in 1996, as a result of which:

- a new organizational system was introduced allowing for greater coordination between the central and territorial structures;
- a modern computerized information network was installed linking the structures of the labour administration throughout the country; and
- the budget of the labour administration rose significantly.

Strasbourg in November 1997 for countries of Western and Central and Eastern Europe on the subject of labour administration as a vector of development. Many Central and Eastern European countries are seeking to model their labour administration systems on those of their neighbours in the European Union. However, the seminar emphasized the differences in the various labour administration systems in European Union countries, adapted to national factors, such as the relative strength of the social partners and of tripartite consultation machinery. The attention of the participants was also drawn to the ways in which modern labour administration systems can equip the social partners and individual jobseekers to take a proactive and dynamic attitude to employment. This involves allowing sufficient space for the social partners to have a real say in the shaping of employment policy. It also means encouraging jobseekers to draw up their own employment, training and career plans, giving them access to computer terminals to allow them to undertake their own job searches and, in general, the development of a more dynamic attitude of the workforce to their employment situation.

A number of information materials were prepared in support of these activities. These ranged from an introductory brochure [17] to a detailed database covering the labour administration systems in 40 countries. A study was also completed on the role of consultation and cooperation bodies in labour administrations.[18] Based on a review of the role played by these bodies in seven industrialized countries, the study points to their particular importance in maintaining social dialogue during periods of high tension, when economic constraints make it necessary for the various social actors to be seen to share responsibility for the policies that are adopted. There are broad differences between the types of cooperation bodies set up in the various countries and their development is very dependent on the political orientations of governments. Major influences on the structure of cooperation machinery include decentralization, which is likely to affect the geographical level at which they operate, and the development of regional economic integration, which is opening up new horizons for supranational cooperation structures.

With more specific reference to employment services, the central focus of the biennium was undoubtedly the adoption of the Private Employ-

During the biennium, with support from the ILO, **encouraging steps were taken in the field of labour administration** in:

- *Estonia*, where a work environment department was established in the Ministry of Social Affairs to deal with policy issues and labour legislation; a tripartite advisory council on the work environment was also created;
- *Latvia*, where a workplace information management system was set up with the technical assistance of the ILO, based on the experience acquired in a pilot project in Jelgava district;
- *Lithuania*, where the tripartite commission on labour protection discussed a proposed national policy on labour protection, which had been developed with the technical assistance of the ILO; and
- *Slovakia*, where a department of labour protection was set up within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Family, and the legislation determining the functions of the labour administration system was revised.

ment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and Recommendation (No. 188) by the Conference in 1997 (see box). Preparatory work for the adoption of these instruments included the publication of studies on the impact of employment agencies on the functioning of the labour market in Austria, Hungary, Japan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka,[19] as well as a study on the relationship between public employment services and private employment agencies.[20]

Technical assistance was provided in a number of countries, including Albania, Jordan, Lebanon, South Africa and Viet Nam, as well as in the occupied Arab territories, to help in the development of employment services. In South Africa, the assistance offered consisted of advisory services on the adaptation of the employment services to the new democratic system. In the occupied Arab territories, ILO support guided the first stages of the creation of an employment service concerned with obtaining and disseminating information on job vacancies, including through media such as radio and television. Meetings were also organized to facilitate the exchange of experience on employment services. These included an interregional technical meeting held in Geneva in January 1997, in collaboration with the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES), on the strategies developed by public employment services in response to structural changes in the labour market.[21] The meeting examined practices of cooperation between public employment services and private employment agencies in Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. These included the creation in 1996 of the Public Employment Placement Enterprise in Australia, which now competes for business in a wide range of employment services against other private and community sector organizations. It also discussed the manner in which many public employment services are

New standards on private employment agencies

At its 85th Session in 1997, the Conference adopted the Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and Recommendation (No. 188). Convention No. 181 is a revision of the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 96).

Convention No. 96, which has received 41 ratifications, allows ratifying States to choose either the progressive abolition of fee-charging employment agencies or to regulate them. However, over recent decades it has become clear that Convention No. 96 fails to recognize the increasingly important role played in the labour market by new types of private employment agencies, and particularly service providers, such as staff-leasing firms, job shops and temporary work agencies. It is therefore unable to provide adequate protection to jobseekers and workers using these agencies.

The new Convention recognizes the legitimacy and efficient contribution made by bona fide private employment agencies to the functioning of the labour market, while ensuring adequate protection for the jobseekers and workers engaged by them. It is a flexible instrument that allows ratifying States the necessary freedom to respond to a variety of national and regional situations.

The principal provisions of Convention No. 181 include:

- government responsibility for determining the conditions for the operation of private agencies through a system of licensing, certification or other form of regulation consistent with national law and practice;
- protection for jobseekers and workers using private employment agencies (particularly vulnerable categories, such as migrant workers) in relation to fee-charging, personal data, freedom of association, collective bargaining, minimum wages and other conditions of work;
- allocation of the respective responsibilities for terms and conditions of employment between user enterprises and private employment agencies;
- definition of appropriate relations for cooperation between public employment services and private employment agencies; and
- a clear signal that private employment agencies should neither use nor supply child labour.

Recommendation No. 188 provides more detailed guidelines for implementation, particularly as regards worker protection and the relationship between public employment services and private employment agencies.

now adopting management by objectives and results, as well as the functional development of many services from administrative assistance to self-service, from the exchange of information across a counter to the organization of venues offering jobseekers extensive information and documentary resources.

Labour inspection

Experience in the development of labour inspection systems over the past decade has shown that a shift from a relatively rigid concept of reactive control to one of anticipatory prevention almost invariably leads to substantial progress in the results obtained. Labour inspection is one of the most important instruments available to States for the development of a culture of prevention, in terms of not only safety and health, but also with regard to industrial relations, employment and general conditions of work. However, relatively few inspectorates have successfully developed this aspect of their work, which requires a reorientation of traditional policies, methods and procedures, the willingness and capacity to influence legislative reforms and the development of new relations with employers' and workers' representatives. Indeed, the ability of many labour administrations to operate efficient and effective labour inspection services, as defined in the relevant international labour standards, is still quite limited and their scope is often confined to larger establishments in the formal sector.

The objective of ILO activities in this regard is the improved capacity of labour inspection systems to fulfil their mandate in an effective and efficient manner. One tool that has been developed over the biennium to assist in the achievement of this objective is a system of audits, which will subsequently be further refined into an instrument for the self-evaluation of labour inspection systems. During the biennium, at the request of the services concerned, audits of labour inspection services were carried out in Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Romania, South Africa and Uganda. The audits are normally carried out by ILO experts in close cooperation with the staff of the labour inspection service. In each case they involve meetings with senior national officials, and often the Minister of Labour, as well as employers' and workers' representatives, and an examination of national and branch structures. The strong and weak points of the system are analysed and the conclusions and recommendations submitted to all the parties concerned. These exercises, for example in the case of South Africa, often lead to the development of proposals for technical cooperation projects to assist in the implementation of reforms and capacity-building activities.

Extensive technical support continued to be provided to countries in Central and Eastern Europe to assist in the development of modern labour inspection systems. Based on the findings

During the biennium, with support from the ILO, important progress was made in the **development of labour inspection services** in a number of countries, including:

- *Argentina* and *Chile*, where significant progress has been made in the legal framework of labour inspection (the powers of labour inspectors to intervene, sanctions, notification of decisions by inspectors, etc.), based on recommendations made by the ILO;
- *Brazil*, where a recent ILO audit found that the effectiveness and coordination of the labour inspection system had been much improved; and
- *Bulgaria*, where the concept of establishing a single integrated labour inspection service was agreed to by a high-level national tripartite seminar held in September 1997.

of a study on the role of labour inspection in transition economies,[22] which were discussed with the directors of the labour inspectorates in the countries concerned, technical advisory services continued to be provided, technical cooperation activities undertaken and study tours arranged. It was reported at the end of the previous biennium that, with assistance from the ILO, Hungary and Poland had developed labour inspection services that were close to achieving conformity with the provisions of the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81). These countries were joined during the biennium 1996-97 by the three Baltic States and Bulgaria.

Employers' activities

The role played by employers' organizations is essentially determined by the services required of them by their members. These range from representing employers' interests in the formulation of national policy, to technical advice and capacity-building activities to enhance enterprise performance. The precise services required by employers depend on the direction in which they are likely to develop in the years to come, particularly under the impact of globalization, technological advances, the movement of transition countries towards a market economy and the need to improve performance in an increasingly competitive business environment. Employers' organizations in a number of countries have shown initiative and dynamism in adapting to this changing demand by anticipating the needs of their members. Others require assistance to be able to follow their example.

The objective of the ILO in this respect is the development of strong, independent and representative employers' organizations which can play an essential role in the formulation and implementation of labour market policies and the enhancement of enterprise competitiveness. In pursuit of this objective, and in response to requests for assistance, the Office engaged in a process of close and active partnership with its constituency of employers' organizations, designed to help them undertake a strategic assessment of their development objectives and establish action plans for their achievement. A number of regional and subregional initiatives were launched for this purpose. These included three subregional seminars and over 20 national workshops in Latin America. The principal challenges affecting 14 employers' organizations in Asia and the Pacific over the next decade were covered in a regional workshop held in Turin, which was followed up by national workshops. Regional workshops were also held in Turin and in Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Tunisia and Zimbabwe for African employers' organizations, as well as a workshop in Hungary for organizations in Eastern Europe. Advisory services and consultancies were provided to help give effect to the findings of these meetings. In support of this work, publications were produced on the future role of employers' organizations in Asia [23] and French-speaking Africa.[24]

Strategic planning is by definition an ongoing process and much remains to be done to set it in motion effectively in many employers' organizations. But the approach offers a number of advantages. In several instances, it has been accompanied by an assessment of the emerging business environment and the key challenges and issues facing enterprises. It has provided the participating organizations with a clear development path, encompassing both the national and regional perspective. In some cases, it has led to the identification of ways in which the

Through **the formulation of strategic plans by employers' organizations**, the ILO has been able to contribute to the attainment of their development objectives. Examples include:

- *Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua* and *Panama*, where a start has been made in setting up communication departments in each of the organizations and in the development of a public relations role to facilitate their interface with the government, trade unions and the media;
- *Mali, Mauritania* and *Senegal*, where implementation of the strategic plan resulted in a significant improvement in communication with the organization's membership; and
- *Mongolia*, where a training department is being established.

organizations' development goals can be achieved and has revealed areas in which they still need to strengthen their capacity to influence the policy environment. It has also helped to identify services to members that need to be developed or strengthened.

The Office's programme of technical assistance and advisory services was designed to strengthen capacities in the technical areas identified by employers' organizations during this process. This programme consisted of a wide range of capacity-building activities, including seminars and participative workshops, advisory services, the organization of study tours and fellowships, as well as training for targeted individuals. These activities addressed such issues as:

- criteria for the determination of wages;
- the introduction of pay systems linked to performance and skills;
- the improvement of employment relations through workplace cooperation mechanisms, better two-way communication and dispute prevention systems;
- the promotional role of employers' organizations in productivity enhancement;
- the improvement of productivity through stronger labour-management cooperation, improved working conditions and safety practices;
- the provision of information and case-studies on new working arrangements;
- techniques and approaches for the development and more effective utilization of human resources; and
- based on the relevant ILO entrepreneurship promotion materials, the development of services for small enterprises.

These activities have resulted in an improvement in the quality of services provided by employers' organizations, making the latter more attractive to enterprises. This in turn leads to increased membership, which is the most critical measure of strengthened organizations.

The assistance provided was adapted to the specific needs of employers' organizations in their regional or national context. In Africa, for example, greater attention was given to the human resource development needs arising out of the context of structural adjustment and to support for small enterprises. The assistance provided in the Caribbean concentrated on small enterprise development and productivity improvement. In support of this work, research papers on a broad range of topics of interest to employers' organizations were produced, circulated and used in the Office's training and advisory services.[25] Several sets of training materials were also prepared, often with the assistance of national employers' organizations.[26] As described below in Chapter 3, activities were also undertaken to help employers' organizations address child labour and gender issues, including the publication of guidelines on how employers should approach equality at the workplace.[27]

In transition countries, technical cooperation activities continued to focus on: managing employers' organizations in a market economy; strengthening their policy lobbying role;

An innovation in ILO assistance to employers' organizations was the technical support provided to the *Malaysian Employers' Federation (MEF)* for the introduction of a **diploma in industrial relations**. The MEF had been offering courses in industrial relations, but identified a demand to upgrade the course, which was not provided by any other institution in the country. At the request of the MEF, the ILO therefore assisted in the design and conduct of a nine-month modular programme leading up to an examination for the diploma. During the biennium, some 50 representatives of enterprises participated in the course, which has become an annual activity of the MEF in view of the positive feedback from its member enterprises and the interest generated by the course.

developing their negotiating and bargaining skills so that they can participate more effectively in tripartite and bipartite relations; and introducing and managing the provision of services to members and the generation of income for the organizations. The assistance provided in this and previous biennia has helped employers' organizations in a number of transition countries, such as the Czech Republic and Hungary, expand their membership base, develop the services they provide to their members and play a more important advocacy role in policy-making at the national level. However, in many transition countries significant obstacles still prevent employers' organizations from achieving their development objectives. The enabling regulatory environment, which provides the checks and balances of a market economy, is not yet functioning and the private sector is still at an embryonic stage. As a result, the potential membership base of employers' organizations is still fairly narrow and it is difficult for them to respond to the pressure for change with the scarce resources available to them.

Initially, employers' organizations in transition countries often find that it is through the provision of business support services that they can best serve the needs of their potential membership. The assistance provided to them by the Office therefore concentrates on building their capacity to provide these services. This was the case, for example, in Mongolia, where it was through the provision of business support services, including training, information and research in selected areas, that the employers' organization first gained credibility among its client base. It is only recently that it has been able to play a role in the development of social policy. Considerable work therefore remains to be done in this and the next decade before the organizations in many transition countries are able to assume their rightful role in national socio-economic development.

In response to the increasingly proactive approach adopted by employers and their organizations to combating child labour, the ILO played an important role in the identification of strategies and the mobilization of action by employers at the international, regional and national levels, particularly in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, India, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania and Turkey. Support was provided to the International Organization of Employers for the preparation of a resolution on child labour, followed by the adoption of policy statements on child labour by employers' organizations in Colombia, Kenya and Peru. After participating in tripartite regional and subregional preparatory seminars, employers' representatives were active at the International Conference on Child Labour, held in Oslo in October 1997, at which they presented the action taken by employers to combat child labour. Employers' organizations have also played an important role on national steering committees set up under the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) and in the implementation of a number of ILO-IPEC projects. These activities led up to the formulation of a programme for employers' organizations, for imple-

Initiatives taken by **employers' organizations to combat child labour**, often with ILO support, include the following:

- the signature in *Bangladesh* of an agreement to eliminate child labour in the garment industry, including a survey to identify working children, a monitoring system, the withdrawal of over 10,000 children from work and their placement in education programmes, and the payment of partial compensation to the children and their families;
- in *Italy*, the General Confederation of Industry (CONFINDUSTRIA) joined forces with workers' organizations to raise well over US$1 million to support child labour projects in developing countries;
- the implementation of child labour programmes in *Kenya* and the *United Republic of Tanzania*, concentrating on awareness-raising and the development of action plans to combat child labour in the agricultural sector; and
- the signature in *Pakistan* of an agreement to gradually eliminate child labour in the production of soccer balls in Sialkot, including internal and external monitoring systems and the setting of targets for the elimination of child labour from the industry.

mentation in the biennium 1998-99, to develop their institutional capacity through the creation of child labour units, which will disseminate information and instigate direct action on child labour, particularly at the sectoral level.

One of the priority areas identified by employers' organizations for the provision of technical assistance by the Office was to develop the services that they offer their members in the field of safety and health. Assistance was delivered to a number of employers' organizations in Asian countries, including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, as well as in Jordan. The support provided consisted of raising the awareness of the employers' organizations as to the role that they can play in the field of safety and health and helping in the development of plans for the provision of safety and health services. Where these plans were well advanced, as in the case of Malaysia, assistance was afforded for their implementation, including the training of focal points and linking the organizations to information systems and databases.

In response to requests for assistance with environmental programmes, pilot projects have been carried out on cleaner production in China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mauritius, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, the United Republic of Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Through a process of consultation between management and workers, the projects involve the identification and implementation of more efficient and cleaner production methods in participating enterprises. They therefore not only address environmental concerns, but make an important contribution to a better industrial relations climate in the enterprises concerned. By the end of the project in 1998, the participating organizations will be capable of offering practical new services to enterprises that wish to improve their environmental performance and save money.

With regard to the major objective of the strengthening of employers' organizations, perhaps the most significant result of the work carried out during the biennium has been the adoption by many employers' organizations of strategic planning as their principal development tool. Such planning places the organization in the context of its own market, helps to prioritize its development options and engenders a coherent and structured approach to institution building. It also emphasizes better information systems and research capacity, staff development and a more strategic perspective of industrial relations, which constitute crucial assets for the future of employers' organizations. For the ILO, it provides a sustainable basis for future cooperation.

Workers' activities

As one of the most representative institutions of civil society, trade unions are among the most relevant forces striving to achieve greater respect for human rights and social justice, promote the values of solidarity and protect the weakest members of society. Their role is particularly important at a time when workers are confronted with the complex challenges arising out of the globalization of the economy and increased worldwide competition. They therefore urgently need to develop new and effective responses to such fundamental and diverse issues as the liberalization of trade and capital markets; structural adjustment programmes and economic integration; new technologies and significant changes in the organization of work; the protection of health and safety and the environment; and the continued growth of the informal sector and non-traditional forms of employment, such as part-time work, home work, contract labour and teleworking.

Various responses are beginning to emerge to these vital challenges for the trade union movement at the national, sectoral and international levels. Some workers' organizations are concentrating on renewing and upgrading their own staff, while others have entered into innovative agreements with employers and governments in such areas as flexible working time and performance-related remuneration packages, often in exchange for commitments to recruit more and younger workers. Much has also been done to improve the international exchange of information with a view to placing trade unions in a stronger position to play their collective bargaining role in the context of a globalized economy. Other strategies that have been adopted by workers' organizations include:

- changing the image of trade unions and focusing recruitment campaigns on women and young workers;
- expanding the human and financial resources devoted to recruitment;
- placing an increasing proportion of women in leadership positions in workers' organizations;
- providing additional legal, insurance and other commercial services to members;
- integrating informal sector workers and those in non-traditional working arrangements into mainstream union membership; and
- developing linkages and common campaign strategies with NGOs and community groups on social issues, and notably child labour.

However, the response has been uneven and most trade unions still require a good deal of assistance to develop an effective global strategy that addresses the major challenges confronting them.

The objective of the ILO's activities in this context is the strengthening of trade unions and the enhancement of their capacity to participate in social dialogue, with a view to promoting workers' rights and improving their working and living conditions. The assistance provided to workers' organizations continued to be delivered in the form of advisory services, the production of study materials and teaching aids, and the holding of seminars and other meetings. The administration of fellowship grants was also an important means of providing some 600 trade union leaders and educators with an opportunity to participate in international meetings and training courses, as well as in study programmes in Geneva to familiarize themselves with the ILO's functions, mandate and activities.

Priority areas for technical assistance were identified in consultation with worker constituents at the national level, international trade union organizations and the Workers' group

of the Governing Body. In this connection, a large proportion of activities were focused on Africa, where, despite the hopes raised by the new era of democratization, the general decline in the economy and the worsening quality of working life have placed trade unions in a very difficult position.

Trade unions have consistently formed an important pressure group for the improved observance of international labour standards. During the biennium, almost all the programmes undertaken on behalf of workers' organizations, including a large number of national, subregional and regional seminars and workshops, included information and training activities on the ratification, application and monitoring of international labour standards. A revised workers' education manual on international labour standards was prepared [28] and special attention was devoted to the seven fundamental Conventions, in support of the Director-General's campaign for the further ratification of these Conventions. The impact of the above activities is illustrated by the rapidly increasing number of comments on the application of ratified Conventions submitted in recent years to the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations by workers' organizations.

Rural workers, and particularly rural women workers, are among the least privileged in the world. The programmes and projects undertaken to assist these workers concentrated on strengthening organizations of rural workers, promoting the role of women in these organizations and the provision of training on such key issues as workers' rights, health and safety, environmental concerns, food security and international labour standards. Technical cooperation projects for rural workers were operational in India, Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Central America. The core activities of these projects consisted of training rural workers, and particularly women, as trainers and coordinators to ensure the sustainability of the activities. The project in India concentrated on the development of a corps of trained women activists to improve women's participation in rural workers' organizations. In South Africa, with a view to strengthening the education programmes of rural workers' organizations, three national trade union coordinators and over 250 trainers were provided with training in such subjects as collective bargaining and negotiation, international labour standards and national legislation, equality and gender issues, occupational health and safety and the environment. Study circles were also organized for each participating organization. In Central America and the Dominican Republic, the assistance provided to strengthen rural workers' organizations included training in democratic struc-

A project for the **integration of women in rural workers' organizations** covered agricultural workers' unions in *Ghana, Uganda, Zambia* and *Zimbabwe*. The beneficial effects achieved with the support of the project have included:

- women breaking new ground as trade union leaders, as members of the National Executive Committees in Ghana and Uganda, a member of the International Executive Committee for the Agricultural Trade Group of the IUF for Ghana and as acting General Secretary in Zambia;
- the re-engagement of all the trained women coordinators as trade union staff in Uganda;
- an increase in trade union membership among women and men in all four countries, including over 20,000 new members in Ghana and nearly 7,000 in Zambia;
- the establishment of National Women's Committees and regional or branch women's committees in the trade unions in Ghana, Uganda and Zambia;
- the use of drama and songs to raise awareness of issues such as workers' rights and safety and health measures; and
- a reduction in the number of strikes in plantations in Uganda, attributed in part to the improved negotiating skills and knowledge of union members, which have resulted in better collective agreements.

tures and the functions of organizations of rural workers for 50 grass-roots leaders, as well as the training of ten negotiators and 15 instructors in subjects which included negotiation, equality issues, environment and international labour standards. Specially adapted training materials were developed for each of the above beneficiary groups and a series of training modules for women members of rural workers' organizations were developed and tested.[29]

Another important area in which assistance was provided to workers' organizations was strengthening their capacity to play a meaningful role in the development of national policy, particularly as it relates to employment. A prominent concern was the need to adopt responses to the social and employment consequences of structural adjustment policies and to ensure that trade union views were heard and heeded by policy-makers. Training and policy advice was provided, research carried out and training [30] and information materials produced to increase knowledge of the issues involved.[31] Technical support was provided to a series of national meetings organized by the trade union movement and attended by representatives of governments and the international financial institutions. The Office provided support for meetings of this type in a number of countries, including Benin, Bulgaria, Congo, Croatia, Egypt, Guinea, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo and Tunisia. These meetings responded to an increasing willingness on the part of the Bretton Woods institutions to engage in dialogue concerning their proposed reforms. The meetings undoubtedly contributed to the pressure that has led to recent generations of structural adjustment programmes endeavouring to offset their negative employment effects by placing more emphasis on social policy measures and economic growth.

Technical support was provided to trade union organizations in countries involved in regional economic integration processes, particularly in the context of the common market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) in Latin America. The Trade Union Coordinating Council (*Coordinadora de Centrales Sindicales del Cono Sur — CCSCS*), a subregional trade union organization covering the countries concerned, has been playing an increasingly active role in the tripartite advisory bodies set up by MERCOSUR and has made a significant contribution to the determination of social issues by the countries concerned, including the identification of a minimum set of ILO Conventions that would provide the basis for threshold labour standards in MERCOSUR countries. In addition to advisory services, seminars were organized for the member organizations of the CCSCS on labour legislation, social security, employment policy and vocational training in the context of MERCOSUR.

With a view to helping trade unions develop a coherent response to the growing importance of precarious forms of work, research was conducted

The participants in the **seminar in Mexico** noted that:

- the incidence of **contract labour** is increasing as enterprises endeavour to lower their costs to remain competitive in globalized markets;
- although traditionally common in the agricultural and construction sectors, contract labour is now spreading to the textile and other sectors;
- it is very important in the context of contract labour to preserve the employment relationship and prevent it from becoming merely a commercial relationship; governments therefore need to ensure that contract workers enjoy the same social protection as other workers;
- special measures are needed to protect migrant contract workers, who are particularly vulnerable;
- trade unions have an important role to play in organizing the increasingly large numbers of workers engaged under this form of work; and
- the standards to be adopted by the ILO on contract labour will be particularly important in ensuring that the workers concerned enjoy adequate protection.

in the field of contract labour. A total of 16 case-studies were carried out in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the Americas in a range of economic sectors. Two regional seminars were held in 1997 in New Delhi [32] and Mexico City to identify the main problems associated with contract labour and develop suitable policies for the protection of the workers concerned.

The problems encountered in the observance of basic workers' rights in EPZs were addressed through a number of activities, including research in selected countries in Africa and Central America on employment, wages, working conditions and the application of national legislation and international labour standards in EPZs.[33] Regional seminars for workers' organizations were held in Johannesburg and San José to examine legal and practical obstacles to the exercise of workers' rights and the improvement of their working conditions in EPZs. The participants in the San José seminar outlined a number of areas in which trade unions could work to improve conditions in EPZs, including:

- setting up national tripartite bodies to discuss and reach agreements on the development of export industries through the modernization of enterprises in EPZs and the promotion and verification of working conditions in the zones;
- exerting pressure on governments to include the obligation to observe national labour legislation in the agreements concluded with enterprises in EPZs; and
- providing legal assistance to workers in EPZs who are endeavouring to assert their rights.

The trade union movement has been particularly active in combating child labour during the biennium. Following consultation with international trade union organizations, the support provided by the Office in this regard took two forms: an interregional project and a strengthening of collaboration between trade unions and the International Programme on the

Trade unions combating child labour

An interregional project was set up during the biennium to strengthen the involvement of trade unions in action to combat child labour. The project concentrates on areas in which ILO-IPEC is less active, such as international trade secretariats (ITSs) and certain African countries. Activities have included:

- training activities, including a seminar held in Geneva in April 1997 for ITSs for the development of national and international strategies to combat child labour;
- regional activities, such as those in Africa (and particularly the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe), where the ILO used its tripartite structure to initiate dialogue between the social partners and governments, promoted awareness-raising activities (including theatre and songs, based on the techniques developed by an earlier project to promote the role of women in trade unions) and supported the development of farm schools by workers' organizations;
- support for research in selected sectors, including agriculture (*Bitter harvest: Child labour in agriculture*, by Alec Fyfe), brick kilns and diamond and gem processing;
- international awareness-raising campaigns, including the campaign on child labour in the diamond and gem processing industry at the end of 1997, timed to coincide with a major industry conference held in London;
- the development of training and information disseminated, among other media, on the Internet and a CD-ROM (which will be available in 1998);
- support for exhibitions on the action taken by trade unions to combat child labour, such as the exhibition organized in connection with the International Conference on Child Labour, held in Oslo in October 1997; and
- strengthening the capacity of trade unions to engage in collective bargaining on child labour and other trade union and human rights issues, particularly at the international level, through training and the provision of information, for example on international codes of conduct excluding child labour (including those adopted by the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI), the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the Walt Disney Company).

ILO-IPEC programmes implemented by trade unions include the following:

- the creation of a National Commission on the Rights of the Child and Adolescent by the CUT in *Brazil* to facilitate the involvement of the trade union movement in national policy development;
- the organization by the National Confederation of Agricultural Workers in *Brazil* of training courses for union leaders on the inclusion in collective agreements of clauses on children's rights, which have led to the incorporation or improvement of such clauses in a number of collective agreements;
- the organization of non-formal education centres and gardening schools by the Rural Workers' Union of Petrolina in *Brazil* to remove children from dangerous conditions in fruit production;
- the establishment of child labour monitoring units in trade unions in *India, Indonesia, Kenya, the Philippines* and *Turkey* for the purpose of awareness-raising;
- the preparation of a survey of child labour by the Central Organization of Trade Unions in *Kenya* to guide its future work on the subject; and
- the setting up in the *United Republic of Tanzania* of the Media Women's Association, which raises awareness of child labour in domestic service through meetings with parents and groups in the communities from which child domestic workers originate.

Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC). Since ILO-IPEC was launched in 1992, trade unions have been associated with the implementation of over 100 of its programmes. During the biennium, there has been a clear increase in the proportion of ILO-IPEC programmes involving trade union participation.

The many challenges facing trade unions do not reduce the importance of their traditional work of developing the skills of their members. Of the activities carried out by the ILO in support of trade unions, considerable emphasis continued to be laid on further developing and strengthening workers' education programmes. Assistance continued to be provided to workers' organizations in the majority of developing countries, including advice on the strategic planning and administration of workers' education services and in-service training for national counterparts. In particular, projects for the development of workers' education capacities among trade unions were carried out in Chile, Egypt, Eritrea, Haiti, India, Lebanon, Mongolia, Mozambique, the Philippines, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uganda and Viet Nam. A series of courses was also held at the Turin Centre for the various regions and linguistic groups to help trade unions develop their programmes of workers' education. In support of these activities, four issues a year of the *Workers' Education* journal continued to be published in English, French and Spanish, focusing on subjects such as trade unions and child labour, migrant workers, new technology and contract labour.[34] Training materials were also produced on such subjects as gender equality bargaining,[35] workers' participation in decision-making in the enterprise [36] and safety and health at work.[37]

In an increasingly globalized world, a prodigious and uninterrupted flow of data circulates through telecommunications networks and is used by enterprises to ensure that they are in a position to adapt rapidly to demand and economic developments. The same technology needs to be introduced by trade unions to help them shape their responses at the national and international levels. Indeed, a number of trade unions are already making use of modern communications systems, particularly in such fields as bargaining information services, solidarity campaigns and trade union organization and education. Advisory services were provided to trade unions to help them take advantage of the opportunities offered by new communications technology, backed up by the implementation of a series of courses. The Bureau for Workers' Activities put its homepage on the Internet in October 1996 and preparations are under way for the development of a system of "on-line tele-learning".

The cases mentioned below illustrate the tangible results that can be obtained through **assistance in the training of trade union members**:

- following the efforts made in Central and Eastern Europe to help trade unions adjust to the new realities of market economies, including the organization of over 50 national and subregional seminars for trade union leaders and members, a survey of some 3,000 trade union representatives involved in the negotiation of collective agreements in *Bulgaria*, the *Czech Republic*, *Hungary*, *Poland* and *Slovakia* found that between 16 per cent (in Poland) and 32 per cent (in Bulgaria) had received ILO assistance in the form of information, advice, background material or training;
- the establishment of a trade union training centre in *Chile*, the management and operations of which have now been taken over by the Single Central Organization of Chilean Workers (CUT);
- support provided to the central trade union organizations in *Nepal* to enable trade union leaders to intervene more effectively in the determination of social and labour policy helped persuade the Government to convene a national labour conference for the first time in 1997; and
- improved awareness by trade union members of environmental issues has led to the development and adoption of agreements with a number of enterprises in the *Philippines*, including the Superior Gas and Equipment Company and the United Pulp and Paper Company, concerning the greening of the workplace and the development of more environmentally friendly production methods.

Sectoral activities

The ILO's programme of sectoral activities acts as an interface with its constituents in the principal economic sectors, with the objectives of promoting social dialogue at the sectoral level and facilitating the exchange of information between constituents on labour and social developments relevant to specific sectors. This objective has traditionally been pursued by holding international tripartite or, where appropriate, bipartite sectoral meetings. The biennium 1996-97 was the first in which a new system was introduced, following an evaluation of the ILO's sectoral activities undertaken by the Governing Body. The main characteristics of the new system of sectoral activities are:

- the identification of 22 sectors which will receive regular attention in these activities;
- a streamlining of the programme of sectoral meetings, featuring shorter meetings with more focused topics, greater flexibility in composition and structure, a reduced number of agenda items and the inclusion of freer panel discussions; and
- a greater integration of sectoral meetings with other means of action, including more emphasis on follow-up to the meetings and stronger links with the activities of other ILO programmes.

The efforts made over several biennia to increase the relevance and value of the ILO's sectoral activities for constituents have clearly been bearing fruit. Sectoral meetings and the reports prepared for them received wide media coverage. This was particularly true of the Tripartite Meeting on Breaking through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management, information on which is provided in Chapter 3. There was considerable co-operation with other major programmes and major international employers' and workers' organizations and an increase in demand for related technical advisory services. In a number of sectors, tripartite meetings or other follow-up action took place at the national level in partnership with sectoral constituents. A briefing kit was produced to raise the awareness of constituents and Office staff with regard to the sectoral work of the ILO.[38]

Industrial activities

Tripartite meetings were held during the biennium for the construction, agriculture, forestry, iron and steel, and textiles, clothing and footwear sectors. Follow-up activities in these and other sectors took a variety of forms. These included presentations in meetings

organized by constituents and NGOs to promote the ratification of the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176). An agreement was also reached with several international organizations, including the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), on collaboration, information sharing and consultation in respect of their work on small-scale mines. In the context of the conference held in Kyoto in December 1997 on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a study was prepared on the impact of stricter environmental legislation on employment in coalmining.[39]

The conclusions of the Tripartite Meeting on Safety and Related Issues pertaining to Work on Offshore Petroleum Installations, held in 1993, have been widely recommended by the main employers' and workers' organizations in the sector as a basis for the regulation of safety issues. At the request of the oil industry, the ILO will cooperate in and endorse the planning and holding of a series of major international conferences on health, safety and the environment in oil and gas exploration and production. These conferences will provide a significant opportunity to promote tripartism in the industry. Following the 1996 Tripartite Meeting on the Globalization of the Footwear, Textiles and Clothing Industries: Effects on Employment and Working Conditions, considerable interest was also shown in the potential of voluntary codes of conduct, adopted by enterprises or employers' organizations, as an instrument for promoting basic human and work-related rights.[40] At the request of the Meeting, a study was published analysing some of the principal codes already in use.[41] National tripartite workshops in Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Sri Lanka responded positively to the development of voluntary national codes for the sector. Studies were also carried out on best practices in training and retraining and on labour issues related to home work in the industry.[42]

In the food, drink and tobacco industry, a series of national tripartite workshops were held on selected topics. In Indonesia, a workshop focused on occupational safety and health in the sector. In Ghana, the subject of the workshop was the impact of increased deregulation and new technologies on the employment and occupational safety and health of food, drink and tobacco workers. Preparations were made for a workshop in Thailand on women's employment and working conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises in the sector. A study was also published on the safety and health of meat, poultry and fish processing workers.[43] Advisory services were provided to the International Metalworkers' Federation for meetings on the mechanical and electrical engineering, transport equipment and shipbreaking industries. Advisory services were also provided to the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) and the International Transport Workers' Federation on various labour issues and several national and subregional meetings were held on lessons from labour adjustment issues and privatization in the transport sector.

Technical cooperation activities to improve working conditions in the forestry sector were finalized during the biennium in Pakistan and Zimbabwe. In Pakistan, the project resulted in the development and introduction of tools and working methods that lead to major gains in productivity while reducing excessive workload. A reform of the pay system for daily labourers could also result in a significant increase in earnings. Major donors supporting large-scale afforestation activities in Pakistan have made the adoption of these ILO techniques and standards one of the conditions for continued funding. A work study branch for the forestry and wood industries was established in Zimbabwe with responsibility for improving efficiency and working conditions. The branch is respected throughout the industry and has been requested

In accordance with the requests for action adopted by the Second Session of the Forestry and Wood Industries Committee in 1991, the ILO has been promoting **codes of practice for forestry** for several years. These activities have started to yield promising results in several countries, including:

- *Chile*, where a tripartite forestry committee adopted a national code of practice for plantation forests in 1997, which was signed by the Minister of Labour. Forestry is the second largest exporter in the country and the code was the first tripartite agreement of its kind. Although not legally binding, the code provides an interpretation of general safety and health legislation for the forestry sector and therefore serves as a basis for inspection. Work on the code was therefore accompanied by a training programme on forestry for the Chilean labour inspectorate.
- *Fiji*, where an evaluation of the National Code of Logging Practice introduced in 1990 found that it has generally been successful in improving environmental performance and increasing efficiency. It has led to major progress in the training of forest workers, although compliance with its safety and health provisions needs more attention.
- *Zimbabwe*, where a code of practice is being formulated and is expected to be endorsed by the national safety and health authority. The code will serve as a guide for training and skills certification schemes and will act as a substitute for safety and health regulations, which do not exist for the forestry industry.

Brazil and Indonesia have also expressed interest in this approach.

to participate in the planning of training and safety programmes. Several activities related to the concept of codes of practice for forestry were carried out, particularly in Chile, Fiji and Zimbabwe, resulting in new forms of cooperation with national constituents in the sector. Important progress in this respect was also made by the Meeting of Experts on Safety and Health in Forest Work in September 1997 with the adoption of an ILO code of practice on safety and health in forest work.[44] The Forestry Workforce Network, which now has a membership of nearly 300 constituents and experts from the sector, proved a useful tool for the collection and dissemination of information and for close contacts between the ILO and its constituents in the sector.[45] Finally, the ILO prepared a technical paper on the social elements of sustainable forest management for the Third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, to be held in June 1998, which is expected to adopt a programme of action on this subject which will have an important global impact.[46]

In response to a resolution adopted by the Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Issues concerning Migrant Workers in the Construction Industry, held in March 1996, the ILO initiated a dialogue with the World Bank and the World Trade Organization concerning the introduction of labour clauses in procurement which is financed or regulated by those organizations.[47] A study was also published on migrant construction labour in Singapore.[48] A number of studies were carried out in response to requests from other sectoral meetings. For the agricultural sector, these included a study on productivity and labour relations in the South Asian tea industry.[49] Studies were also prepared on working conditions in the growing international trade in cut flowers in Colombia, Ecuador and the Netherlands.[50] In the basic metals sector, studies were published on the outlook for the steel workforce beyond the year 2000 in nine countries, as well as on modernization and skills requirements in the steel industry in Mexico.[51] Another study on voluntary initiatives in the chemical industries to improve enterprise performance on health, safety and the environment was widely disseminated and used to stimulate national tripartite discussions leading up to the Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries, to be held in 1999.[52]

Public and private services

In view of the social and labour issues arising from multimedia convergence in the media and entertainment industries, the ILO organized a Symposium on Multimedia Convergence in January 1997, bringing together constituents in the media, culture and graphical sectors.[53] The transformation of traditional employment relations, the widening gap between "info-haves" and "have-nots", the polarization of the workforce into knowledge workers and others, and the precarious nature of the jobs that are being generated have brought the social implications of the information economy into stronger focus. Discussions at the Symposium centred on the application of the principles of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, non-discrimination in employment and equality between men and women workers in the information age. The ILO has subsequently received several requests from constituents in the related sectors to organize regional and subregional seminars to raise the awareness of the social partners of the implications of multimedia convergence and to promote structures for dialogue within the multimedia industries.

The impact of the **Symposium on Multimedia Convergence** was threefold:

- it brought together for the first time representatives of governments, employers and workers to discuss the social and labour impact of the move towards a global information society, in the knowledge that current changes in employment structures, conditions of work and labour relations in the industries concerned are likely to be the precursors of general trends in the twenty-first century;
- by bringing together tripartite representatives of a variety of subsectors to examine the impact of digitalization and industrial convergence in the media and entertainment sector as a whole, the Symposium encouraged interest in closer collaboration across subsectors, particularly among the international trade secretariats representing the graphics industry, broadcasting and media workers, musicians and actors, journalists and communications workers; and
- the Symposium raised the profile of the ILO and its values and principles in international debates on the information society, in which questions of infrastructure and telecommunications technology had previously been predominant. The ILO subsequently participated in various international events on this subject. For example, it held a workshop on the impact of information technology on jobs and work at the conference on Global Knowledge 97: Knowledge for Development in the Information Age, organized jointly by the World Bank and the Canadian Government in Toronto in June 1997.

With regard to the impact of structural adjustment in public services, the ILO participated in the organization of several seminars to follow up the Joint Meeting on the Impact of Structural Adjustment in the Public Services (Efficiency, Quality Improvement and Working Conditions), held in May 1995. These included a subregional trade union conference on the restructuring of public services and the role of trade unions, held in Kiev in October 1996, and a workshop on employment and labour practices in health care in Central and Eastern Europe, held in Prague in May 1997.[54] At a time when the overall costs of structural adjustment programmes are acutely felt in all transition countries, these meetings provided a good opportunity to disseminate the conclusions of the Joint Meeting to a broad audience of government, trade union and employers' representatives. Several participants later indicated that the meetings had led to the commencement of tripartite dialogue at the national level to identify ways of introducing structural reforms in health care services and in public services in general, taking social concerns into account. Other follow-up meetings included a regional study meeting on productivity improvements and human resource development in the civil service, held in Kuala Lumpur in August 1997, which was organized by the Asian Productivity Organization and attended by representatives of the public administrations of

most Asian countries. The ILO also organized a subregional workshop on human resource development in the public service for countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to familiarize participants with the planning and implementation of social dialogue in the public sector and pave the way for ILO training activities in this area.[55]

Several subregional meetings were organized to follow up the Joint Meeting on the Impact of Structural Adjustment on Educational Personnel, held in April 1996.[56] The Joint ILO/UNESCO Symposium on Structural Adjustment Programmes and the Situation of Educational Personnel, held in Dakar in June 1997, examined ways of improving the application in practice of teachers' rights, as set out in international labour standards and the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.[57] A special session of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers examined reports from governments and international and national organizations of teachers and employers, particularly relating to the trade union rights of teachers.[58] The ILO also organized subregional seminars on the situation of teachers in Amman and Bucharest and prepared a study on the situation of women in education in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal.[59]

Maritime activities

Structural changes and the fragmentation of traditional shipping operations, particularly through the extensive use of subcontracting, the employment of seafarers on foreign-registered ships and frequent changes in ownership and ship registration, have complicated the relationship between shipowners and seafarers and have affected seafarers' working and living conditions. In ports, the increased automation of cargo-handling and the structural adjustment programmes introduced to improve efficiency have resulted in reductions in the workforce and affected the training needs and conditions of work of portworkers. The overall objective of the ILO's maritime activities is the promotion of social and economic progress in shipping, fishing, ports and inland water transport, especially as regards the working and living conditions of workers in these industries.

The most important of the ILO's maritime activities during the biennium was the 84th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference held in 1996, which adopted a total of seven international labour standards. These were:

- the Labour Inspection (Seafarers) Convention (No. 178) and Recommendation (No. 185);
- the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention (No. 179) and Recommendation (No. 186);
- the Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention (No. 180) and the Seafarers' Wages, Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Recommendation (No. 187); and
- the Protocol of 1996 to the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 147).

One of the features of the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 147), is that it refers in its Appendix to a number of other ILO Conventions relating to seafarers and containing fundamental work-related rights which set minimum standards for seafarers. The Protocol of 1996 extends the number of Conventions listed in the Appendix to Convention No. 147 and which therefore have to be observed by member States that ratify the Protocol, as well as including another list of Conventions from which member States may

The importance of **Convention No. 147** lies in the fact that nearly all regional agreements between maritime authorities to harmonize the inspection of foreign-registered vessels are based on the Convention, as well as the relevant instruments of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). In the European region, towards the end of 1997, the maritime authorities carried out a concentrated inspection campaign of all ships entering European ports based on materials prepared by the ILO on certain aspects of Convention No. 147. The ILO continued to provide guidance to inspectors in several regions and prepared a training package on Convention No. 147 and inspection, which will be published in 1998.

With the ratification of Convention No. 147 by *Croatia* and *India* in 1996, the Convention had been ratified by 36 member States as of 31 December 1997.

choose those that they wish to accept. Since the Maritime Session of the Conference, emphasis has been placed on promoting the ratification and implementation of the ILO's maritime labour standards, including Convention No. 147 and those adopted in 1996. At the request of ILO constituents, technical advisory services were provided and national tripartite seminars were held in Croatia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Korea, Panama, Philippines and South Africa.

Based on a report prepared by the ILO, at its 28th Session in October 1996, the Joint Maritime Commission agreed to revise the minimum monthly basic pay or wage figure for able seamen, in accordance with the Wages, Hours of Work and Manning (Sea) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 109).[60] The importance of this figure lies in the fact that it is used as a benchmark for different categories of seafarers when collective agreements are negotiated at the national or international level.

With regard to the health of seafarers, the ILO prepared draft guidelines for conducting pre-sea and periodic medical fitness examinations.[61] The guidelines were revised and adopted by an ILO/WHO consultation and will be widely distributed. It is expected that they will have a broad impact on how such examinations are carried out worldwide. Information is provided in Chapter 3 on the manual prepared by the ILO concerning drug and alcohol prevention programmes in the maritime industry.

The principal basis for ensuring the safety and health of portworkers remains the application of the relevant ILO standards. In many countries, law and practice are based on these instruments. For example, in the United States, new regulations on the safety and health of portworkers were adopted which apply the Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152), rather than the earlier Protection against Accidents (Dockers) Convention (Revised), 1932 (No. 32).

As a follow-up to the Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Problems caused by Structural Adjustments in the Port Industry,[62] which was held in May 1996, tripartite seminars and workshops on structural adjustment and human resources issues in ports were organized in Brazil, India, Indonesia and, at the subregional level, in the Philippines. The views expressed at these meetings will be used as a basis for further discussions between governments and the social partners in the restructuring of their ports. Work also continued during the biennium on the finalization of training materials for ports, which were tested in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania.[63] A course was also held for container terminal staff in Brazil using the training materials. Promotional activities were undertaken to raise awareness of the materials and it is expected that a wider programme of training will be developed. For example, at the request of the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa, the ILO carried out a training needs survey and prepared a project proposal for a regional training programme.

Notes

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[3] *Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations: General report and observations concerning particular countries*, Report III (Part 1A), ILC, 86th Session, 1998, paras. 94-125.

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[5] *ILO law on freedom of association: Standards and procedures*, 1995.

[6] *Termination of employment digest: Compilation of legislation* (forthcoming).

[7] *Le droit du travail et l'ajustement structurel: Réformes en Afrique francophone* (ILO/World Bank — forthcoming).

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[9] *Export processing zones in Bangladesh: Economic impact and social issues*, by D. Bhattacharya, Working Paper No. 80, 1997.

[10] *Technological and regulatory changes affecting multinational enterprises in telecommunications: Aspects of the impact on the workforce*, by R. Mansell and P. Tang, Working Paper No. 78, 1996.

[11] *Women workers and working conditions in retailing: A comparative study of the situation in a foreign-controlled retail enterprise and a nationally-owned retailer*, by I. U. Zeytinoğlu and M. Crook, Working Paper No. 79, 1997.

[12] *Multinational enterprises in the courier service industry: Aspects of employment and working conditions in selected enterprises*, by S. C. Wisniewski, Working Paper No. 81, 1997.

[13] *Innovations in social and labour relations in EPZs*, by A. van Heerden (forthcoming).

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[15] *Training manual on improving the situation of women workers in EPZs* (forthcoming).

[16] *Training manual on organizing workers in EPZs* (forthcoming).

[17] *Meeting (changing) needs: Labour administration*, 1997.

[18] *Consultation and cooperation bodies in labour administration*, Labour Administration Branch Document No. 52, 1997.

[19] *The impact of employment agencies on the functioning of the labour market: Country studies*, Labour Administration Branch Document No. 49; No. 49-1, *Country study: Japan — Development of private employment agencies and government policies*, by K. Goka; No. 49-2, *Country study: Hungary — The impact of employment agencies on the functioning of labour markets*, by I. Gere; No. 49-3, *Country study: Austria — Achieving ISO 9001 certification in a public employment service*, by E. Buchinger; No. 49-4, *Country study: Sri Lanka — The impact of employment agencies on the functioning of labour markets*, by C. Rodrigo; and No. 49-5, *Country study: The Philippines — A situational analysis of the labour recruitment industry*, by A. T. Wong; 1997.

[20] *The relationship between public employment services and private employment agencies: Developing a cooperation framework*, Sansier, M., Boutonnat, D. (eds.), Labour Administration Branch Document No. 51, 1997.

[21] *Strategies developed by the public employment service in response to structural changes in the labour market*, Acts of the Inter-regional Technical Meeting WAPES/ILO, Labour Administration Branch Document No. 50, 1997.

[22] *The role of labour inspection in transition economies*, by J. Hammer, C. Ville and W. von Richthofen, Labour Administration Branch Document No. 48, 1996.

[23] *Employers' organizations in Asia in the 21st century*, by S. R. de Silva, 1996.

[24] *L'ajustement stratégique des organisations d'employeurs: L'exemple de l'Afrique du Nord-Ouest*, 1997.

[25] The following research papers were produced during the biennium for use by employers' organizations. Some are in the process of being translated into other languages. They are available upon request from ACT/EMP: *Elements of a sound industrial relations system*, by S. R. de Silva; *Elements in the shaping of Asian industrial relations*, by S. R. de Silva; *An introduction to performance and skill based pay systems*, by S. R. de Silva; *Le rôle du patronat dans l'emploi des personnes handicapées*, by C. Dan; *La planification stratégique des organisations d'employeurs*, by C. Dan; *Les projets d'appui à l'entreprise privée dans le cadre des organisations d'employeurs*,

by C. Dan; *Les organisations d'employeurs face au processus de libéralisation des économies*, by C. Dan; *Le rôle des organisations centrales d'employeurs*, by C. Dan; *La industria de la maquila en Centroamérica*, by E. Gitli, 1997; *Estudio comparativo de legislaciones laborales en América Latina*. A number of research papers were published in the *Report of the Workshop on Employers' Organizations in Asia-Pacific in the Twenty-first Century*, Turin, 5-13 May 1997.

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[28] *International labour standards: A workers' education manual*, 4th (revised) edition (forthcoming).

[29] *Study materials for rural workers' organizations*, a series of training modules (forthcoming).

[30] *Trade unions and structural adjustment: A guide for trade union participation*, by C. S. Venkata Ratnam (International Management Institute), 1997 (manuscript — available from ACT/TRAV upon request).

[31] *Governance of globalization: The ILO contribution*, by R. Kyloh, 1997.

[32] *ILO Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar for Trade Union Organizations on Contract Labour: Proceedings*, New Delhi, Apr. 1997.

[33] *La situación sociolaboral en las zonas francas y empresas maquiladoras del Istmo Centroamericano y República Dominicana*, 1996.

[34] *Workers' Education*, Nos. 102-108, 1996 and 1997.

[35] *A guide to gender equality bargaining* (six booklets), 1997; and training materials entitled *La lutte contre la discrimination dans l'emploi et la profession* (six courses) (forthcoming).

[36] Training materials entitled *La participation aux décisions dans les entreprises* (six courses), 1997.

[37] *Your health and safety at work* (a training package including 12 modules and two instructors' manuals), 1996.

[38] *Sectoral activities briefing kit*, 1997.

[39] *The impact of climate change policies on employment in the coalmining industry*, prepared for the ILO by C. Polidano (Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics), 1997.

[40] *Globalization of the footwear, textiles and clothing industries: Effects on employment and working conditions*, 1996 and *Note on the proceedings: Tripartite Meeting on the Globalization of the Footwear, Textiles and Clothing Industries: Effects on employment and working conditions*, 1996.

[41] *Business ethics in the textile, clothing and footwear (TCF) industries: Codes of conduct*, by J. P. Sajhau, 1997 (also available in French and Thai).

[42] *Toward a code of conduct in the textile, clothing and footwear industries: Laws and possibilities*, a study on the Philippines, by B. Bitonio Jr., 1997; *Labour issues in the textile and clothing industry: A Sri Lankan perspective*, by M. R. Tennekoon, 1997; and *Labour issues in the footwear industry: A Sri Lankan perspective*, by A. Silva, 1997.

[43] *Safety and health of meat, poultry and fish processing workers*, by S. Tomoda, 1997.

[44] *Code of practice on safety and health in forest work*, 1997.

[45] For further information on the Forestry Workforce Network, please contact Mr. P. Poschen, Sectoral Activities Department, International Labour Office.

[46] *People, forests and sustainability: Social elements of sustainable forest management in Europe*, 1997.

[47] *Note on the proceedings: Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Issues concerning Migrant Workers in the Construction Industry*, 1996.

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[50] *Flower growing and employment in Colombia*, by P. Egger (forthcoming); *Flower growing and employment in Ecuador*, by P. Egger (forthcoming); and *The Dutch flower sector: Structure and employment*, by P. Elshog (forthcoming).

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[57] *Final report: Colloque conjoint ILO/UNESCO sur les programmes d'ajustement structurel et la condition du personnel enseignant*, Dakar, 23-26 June 1997.

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[59] *Les femmes dans les filières techniques et professionnelles: Situation des enseignantes dans quatre pays ouest-africains (Bénin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali et Sénégal)*, 1996.

[60] *Wages, Hours of Work and Manning (Sea) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 109): Updating of the minimum basic wage of able seamen*, Joint Maritime Commission, 28th Session, Geneva, Oct. 1996.

[61] *Guidelines for conducting pre-sea and periodic medical fitness examinations of seafarers*, Annex II of the Report of the ILO/WHO Consultation on Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers, Geneva, 25-27 Nov. 1997.

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[63] *Portworker Development Programme*, 1997.

2 The fight against unemployment and poverty

This chapter describes the activities carried out by the ILO to help constituents combat unemployment and poverty, particularly through the creation of employment opportunities and the improvement of existing jobs. Guided, as in all of its work, by international labour standards and the principles of democracy and social justice, the ILO provides advice and guidance to constituents on their employment and labour market policies, as well as on their labour market information and statistical systems. Considerable emphasis is also placed on policy advocacy at the international level, with a view to gaining greater international acceptance of ILO policies and principles, particularly, although not exclusively, among the Bretton Woods institutions.

An increasingly important component of the ILO's activities for the promotion of employment is the support that it offers constituents to encourage and develop entrepreneurship, with a view to improving enterprise performance and promoting employment and incomes through the creation of cooperatives and small and micro-enterprises, particularly by vulnerable groups. Related activities are designed to increase productivity and improve the policy environment for informal sector enterprises. The ILO's work to encourage the use of labour-intensive methods and technologies in large-scale investment projects continued to gain broader recognition during the biennium and was instrumental in raising the standards of living of its beneficiaries, often from a very low initial level.

This chapter also covers the ILO's activities in the field of human resources development, with emphasis on the adaptation of training policy and delivery to the rapidly changing skill requirements and the special needs of vulnerable groups of the population, such as the poor and workers in rural areas. Particular emphasis was placed during the biennium on responding to the needs of countries affected by conflict.

Employment strategies

Despite the far-reaching political and economic changes of the past decade, the promotion of full, productive and freely chosen employment has remained an unresolved challenge for many national economies and the international community as a whole. Nevertheless, in recent years member States have in general made considerable progress in undertaking the necessary reviews and evaluations of the macroeconomic, sectoral and labour market policies which affect their employment situation. An example of the increased concern of industrialized countries to take active employment promotion measures is the International Conference on Social Policy and Economic Performance, hosted by the Government of the Netherlands in Amsterdam in January 1997, which was addressed by the ILO Director-General, and the "Jobs Summit" organized by the European Union in Luxembourg in November 1997. In many developing countries, recent generations of economic reform and structural adjustment programmes, implemented under the auspices of the Bretton Woods institutions, have included measures to assist the groups which are most affected, as greater account has been taken of the

Towards greater participation by the social partners in economic reform and structural adjustment

Since the early 1990s, structural adjustment programmes have included measures to help alleviate their social consequences, reflecting concerns expressed by the ILO and other United Nations agencies. These frequently take the form of social funds. For example, in Nicaragua and Guatemala the social funds targeted the poor, while in El Salvador and Chile they were aimed more at the middle class, who were impoverished as a result of the reform policies. In Bolivia, Honduras and Peru the funds enabled a significant number of jobs to be created, covering over 1 per cent of the labour force. An Economic and Social Adjustment Credit was established in Zambia, and special price subsidies were introduced to protect poor workers after the devaluation of the CFA franc in Cameroon, Congo, Gabon and Senegal. In several of these countries, the ILO was directly involved in the provision of advisory services in connection with social funds.

However, the aim of these measures is to provide emergency support for poor families, whereas the principal objective of reform programmes is to create economic growth that is distributed more widely, and particularly towards the poor, the low-paid and disadvantaged social groups. The ILO is therefore advocating a new generation of adjustment programmes which seek to include people and institutions as actors, thereby promoting participation and consultation between the social partners. One of the central concerns expressed at the Social Summit was that, instead of being dominated by central banks, finance ministries and related institutions, adjustment programmes should be brought back into the realm of national policy-making with the objective of economic and social development, not only for the people, but also by the people.

These issues were discussed in a seminar held in Kampala in September 1996 in which the ILO, UNDP, the Bretton Woods institutions, academics and governments discussed the situation in five eastern and southern African countries. Visiting IMF and World Bank missions to these countries are now advised to consult the social partners. Moreover, the World Bank is providing financial support to the Economic Development Council in Zimbabwe, in which the social partners are to discuss economic policy initiatives.

ILO's principles and concerns at the national and international levels. However, despite the measures taken to address social concerns, greater attention needs to be paid to the issue of participation by the social partners in the design and implementation of these programmes and policies.

The publication prepared for the Kampala seminar (see box) was based on the conclusions of five national seminars held in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.[1] The discussions at the seminar showed that governments are enthusiastic to develop employment policies with a poverty-reducing focus as an integral element of adjustment programmes. Support was also expressed for regular consultation between governments and employers' and workers' organizations on the impact of adjustment on the labour market.

An important basis for the the formulation of the relevant employment policies by constituents is a good understanding of external factors, globalized trends and their own economic and social situation. The ILO contributes to the improvement of this understanding through its monitoring, analysis and documentation of global developments in employment, particularly in its series of reports on the world employment situation, the second of which, entitled *World employment 1996/97: National policies in a global context*, was published in November 1996.[2]

The report received extensive media coverage when it was launched and has since continued to give rise to steady interest in journals and magazines, as well as invitations to present it at various national and international policy and academic seminars. It also provided the basis for ILO contributions to the G7 Employment Conferences in Lille (April 1996) and

World employment 1996/97: National policies in a global context

World employment 1996/97 reports on an employment situation that remains grim and is resulting in increased social exclusion in many industrialized countries, compounded by rising wage inequality and growing numbers of "working poor" in some member States. In the transition economies there have been sharp increases in income inequality, even where the rise in unemployment has been relatively moderate. In most of the developing world, the majority of the labour force remains trapped in low productivity employment that offers little relief from poverty.

However, the report contests the idea that the growing globalization of the world economy will necessarily aggravate the situation and maintains that there is still considerable policy autonomy at the national level. Global financial markets punish unsound macroeconomic policies, which are in any case undesirable *per se*. Nevertheless, the report admits that, while economic liberalization brings far broader gains when compared to the alternative of protectionism, it will generate short- or medium-term social costs. It is therefore important to manage the transition to a more open market economy at a pace and in a manner that minimize social costs and to ensure that it is supported by strong compensatory policies towards those most adversely affected.

In addition, citing certain dramatic "end of work" forecasts, it emphasizes that, despite rising unemployment, there has been no generalized decline in the employment intensity of economic growth. Higher unemployment has been caused by a decline in growth rates, rather than any onset of jobless growth. The report therefore maintains that, far from being an outdated objective, full employment is still feasible and highly desirable, despite the rise of non-standard forms of work and other recent changes in the labour market.

The report emphasizes the need to reverse the prolonged deterioration in the employment situation through high and sustained rates of economic growth. In the developing countries, in particular, this depends on the successful implementation of economic reforms to achieve macroeconomic stability and a more efficient, open and competitive economy. However, this does not preclude an active role for the State in several areas, such as overcoming market imperfections and high levels of inequality in the distribution of income and assets. Moreover, market reforms on their own will be weak unless they are accompanied by programmes to strengthen the productive capacity of the poor, including the development of rural infrastructure, credit schemes and improved access to education and health services.

Kobe (November 1997), as well as to the United Nations Commission for Social Development, which met in February 1997. The wide impact of the report has helped to consolidate the ILO's role as the lead agency on employment issues, especially in the follow-up to the 1995 World Summit for Social Development (the Social Summit).

Another opportunity at the international level for the ILO to re-emphasize the interrelationship between economic, social and employment policy was its chairing and coordination of the Task Force on Full Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods, set up by the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). Composed of representatives of the IMF, the World Bank, the specialized agencies and the United Nations, the Task Force decided to follow up the Social Summit by undertaking a number of country reviews of policies related to employment and sustainable livelihoods, carried out with the full consent of the countries concerned and in close collaboration with the public authorities and the social partners. The ILO prepared three of the seven country reviews, with the other agencies taking responsibility for the remainder. The reviews carried out by the ILO were on Chile, Hungary and Nepal (see box for Nepal and Chapter 4 for more information on the reviews on Chile and Hungary) and were each presented to a national tripartite employment summit. As a follow-up to this process, the Governing Body decided that the ILO would carry out further country employment policy reviews. These were commenced towards the end of the biennium in Brazil and Ukraine, while discussions were under way for further reviews in Barbados, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Pakistan, followed by Austria, Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands.

The principal findings of the **country employment policy review for Nepal** were that the economy is characterized by very high levels of underemployment and poverty. Working conditions are often unhealthy and unsafe and the organized sector of the economy is limited in scope. There is some bonded labour in rural areas and quite a high incidence of child labour in family work, although few children are wage workers. Moreover, there is a paucity of statistics to guide policy formulation. The review points to the need for vigorous policies on the labour side and the need to strengthen employers' and workers' organizations. Despite the strong commitment to dealing with the problem of child labour, a coherent strategy is still being worked out.

The review exercise was given a high political profile and the findings are being used by the Government for the development of a national employment and growth strategy. A first labour force survey was also undertaken and a project has been developed to establish a labour market information system.

Other policy guidance activities, particularly at the regional and national levels, concentrated on the impact of globalization and regional integration; and jobs, technology and skill requirements in a globalized economy. Many different models of regional trading arrangements, involving greater or lesser levels of cooperation, are being introduced. Considerable interest has been expressed, particularly by southern African countries, in learning from the experiences of other regions and the employment effects of the arrangements that have been introduced, with a view to identifying their positive aspects and avoiding their drawbacks. In response to these requests for information and analysis, issues relating to the impact on employment of globalization and regional integration, especially in the South, were examined and the findings published.[3] Other studies analysed the employment effects of existing regional trading arrangements, including ASEAN,[4] certain MERCOSUR countries,[5] NAFTA [6] and the Association Agreements between the European Union and Morocco and Tunisia.[7] A further study examined the options for regional trading arrangements in the whole of the western hemisphere and their employment implications.[8]

The relationship between the supply of skilled labour and the acquisition and use of new technologies by industry has considerable implications for the design of human resource development policies. Building on investigations of employment and structural adjustment in Brazil [9] and Mexico,[10] studies were carried out to identify sectoral policies that are likely to encourage the generation of higher quality jobs. These studies focused on jobs, technology and skill requirements in a globalized economy, with special reference to Brazil,[11] Canada,[12] the Republic of Korea,[13] Mexico [14] and Singapore.[15] The studies document the complexity of the relationship between skill acquisition and the introduction of new technology, and the coexistence in many cases of a broad range of technologies and skill levels.

Labour market policies

Policies to improve the equity and efficiency of labour markets are required to address the problems of unemployment and social exclusion. To design and evaluate these policies, governments and the social partners need to undertake the necessary analysis, based on the collection of reliable and accurate labour market information. The objective of the ILO's activities in this connection is the enhanced capacity of governments and the social partners to carry out this important task more effectively.

As a tool to help constituents improve their collection and analysis of labour market information, a set of technical notes was prepared on the development of labour market infor-

Assistance was provided to strengthen the capacity of constituents to carry out **labour market, enterprise and other surveys** in a number of countries, including:

- *Armenia*, where, following ILO assistance in undertaking a survey of internal enterprise labour markets in part of the country, the Government went on to carry out a survey in other areas;
- *Georgia*, where the ILO assisted in a survey of internal enterprise labour markets in certain regions and the Government is now planning a survey to cover the rest of the country;
- *Kyrgyzstan*, where the results of surveys carried out with ILO assistance on the employment effects of restructuring enterprises were discussed with government officials and presented at a national workshop on employment and poverty alleviation held in Bishkek in September 1997; and
- *Lithuania*, where advice was provided on the design of a series of surveys, including a labour force survey, to measure poverty and social exclusion, and advice was later requested on the use of the data compiled in the surveys.

mation systems. Taking into account the experience acquired by the ILO in this field, the notes cover the various components of labour market information systems, including censuses, labour market surveys and establishment surveys. They also address the principal policy issues for the measurement and analysis of information in the areas of human resource development and employment promotion for vulnerable groups. The notes will be circulated to constituents for discussion and review.

Although decisions taken at the enterprise level play an important role in determining demand for labour, policy-makers often have little access to information on enterprise-level labour market developments. To enhance the capacity of constituents to analyse developments in internal enterprise labour markets, and particularly enterprises undergoing restructuring or privatization in transition countries, assistance was provided for the implementation of enterprise labour flexibility surveys in Armenia, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan.[16] Advisory services were also provided to the Government of Lithuania to improve the design of labour force surveys and to the Government of Kazakhstan to evaluate employment promotion programmes. The ILO assisted in a pilot survey of human resource development needs in three districts in Egypt with a view to the subsequent implementation of a national survey. The findings of the pilot survey were submitted to the Egyptian Social Fund for Development to assist in the formulation of the national human resource development policy.[17]

In an initiative designed to increase the visibility of the ILO in debates on labour market issues at the national and international levels, work was commenced on the development of key ILO labour market indicators. Fifteen ILO labour market indicators have been selected for this purpose, covering such areas as the labour force and its skill level, employment, unemployment, manufacturing wages and labour productivity. Beginning with the collection of data and the development of databases, this activity will provide the basis for the publication of an annual report on employment and labour market trends during the biennium 1998-99.

With a view to strengthening the policy guidance provided to constituents, research and analysis concentrated on three areas: the role of the social partners in the design and delivery of active labour market policies; [18] active measures to address long-term unemployment; [19] and the value of exchanges of experience between industrialized and middle-income developing countries.[20] The results of this work will be made available to constituents through the relevant publications and in the Office's policy advisory and technical assistance activities.

Youth unemployment

The unemployment rate among young persons is much higher than that of the adult population in very many member States. Although ambitious schemes have been launched to deal with the problem and experimental measures tried, ranging from apprenticeships and subsidized internships to incentives for the recruitment of young persons, they have not always produced the expected results. To provide guidance to policy-makers, an action programme was carried out with the following objectives: increasing awareness of the problem and its consequences; improving understanding of the available policy and programme options; and enhancing the capacity of member States to formulate policies and implement the relevant programmes.

Based on studies of the situation as regards youth unemployment and the responses to it adopted in a number of industrialized, transition and developing countries, a comparative report has been prepared. The report analyses the causes of the high levels of youth unemployment and evaluates labour market policies designed to promote youth employment. It draws together the findings of country studies and national seminars and identifies the lessons to be learnt from success stories and more negative experiences. A manual is also being developed to provide guidance on policy options, their advantages and disadvantages and the requirements for successful implementation. The manual covers several key policy areas, including the macroeconomic context, the role of employment services, education and training, minimum wages, labour market information and specific measures for vulnerable groups. The manual and comparative study will be published early in 1998. The findings of the action programme will be more widely disseminated during the biennium 1998-99 and will be followed up through seminars and technical cooperation projects.

Labour statistics

In an increasingly numerate and globalized world, the development of sound statistical systems based on internationally recognized concepts and methods is taking on ever greater importance. Labour statistics play a special role in providing a basic link between economic and social statistics. They cover such important issues as employment, underemployment and unemployment, wages, labour costs, hours of work, consumer prices and family incomes, occupational classifications, occupational injuries and diseases, and industrial disputes. The objectives of the ILO's statistical activities are:

- the development of international standards for labour statistics;
- the application of these standards by member States in the production of national labour statistics; and
- the provision to users worldwide of the most important labour statistics for as many countries as possible.

The framework for this work is set out in the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160), and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 170). The detailed guidelines take the form of the resolutions adopted over the years by successive International Conferences of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).

ILO assistance contributed in many cases to an **improvement in labour statistics systems**, including:

- *the West Bank and Gaza*, where a labour statistics unit has been created in the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and regular labour force surveys have been carried out during the biennium;
- *Armenia*, where the first survey was carried out on the volume and structure of the informal sector, which has become important during the transition period in terms of both numbers of workers and output;
- *Azerbaijan*, where a pilot labour force survey was completed and its results published in 1996 as a first step towards the regular collection of consistent, comprehensive and internationally comparable labour statistics; and
- *Turkey*, where the State Institute of Statistics has improved its survey instruments, greatly shortened the time necessary for the publication of survey results, started to issue a periodic *Labour Market Bulletin* and developed a labour market information database, which is now partly accessible on the Internet.

Technical assistance was provided to help member States produce useful, reliable and comparable labour statistics in line with international statistical standards. Technical advisory services were delivered to nearly 40 countries. Technical cooperation projects on national labour statistics were continued in Azerbaijan, Turkey and the West Bank and Gaza. New projects were launched in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine. A training programme on labour force surveys and population censuses in transition countries was implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. In this context, the ILO provided support for regional seminars on informal sector statistics for African and Asian and Pacific countries, held in Addis Ababa, Bamako, Lisbon and Bangkok. It also played an active role in the newly established international Expert Groups on Informal Sector Statistics (the Delhi Group) and on Labour and Compensation Statistics (the Paris Group).

The quality and presentation of the data contained in the ILO's three major regular publications on labour statistics continued to be improved. These publications are the *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*,[21] the *Bulletin of Labour Statistics*,[22] and its special annual supplement *Statistics on occupational wages and hours of work and on food prices: October Inquiry results*.[23] The innovations in the *Yearbook* included the publication of data, whenever possible, according to the latest versions of the international standard classifications; the provision of data on the economically active population and on unemployment by level of education; and a new standard presentation for time series. Volume 5 of the *Sources and Methods* series was issued in 1996, covering statistics of the total and economically active population, employment and unemployment, derived from population censuses.[24] The fourth edition of *Economically active population, 1950-2010* was also completed in 1996-97.[25]

The Bureau of Statistics has now set up a home page in English, French and Spanish on the ILO public Web site, which contains a large volume of textual information, including methodological guidelines, classifications, selected statistical publications and reports for forthcoming conferences and meetings of experts. It will be expanded to offer selected national statistical data and, in time, will replace the regular supplement to the *Bulletin of Labour Statistics*, as well as the *Newsletter*, of which No. 8 was issued in December 1996 and No. 9 towards the end of 1997.

Work on the development and refinement of internationally recognized standards for labour statistics included statistics of child labour, occupational injuries, the informal sector,

poverty and labour market dynamics and national classifications of status of employment. In addition, two action programmes were carried out covering, respectively, statistics of underemployment and income from employment.

National practices for the compilation of statistics of occupational injuries were reviewed. The main measurement and classification issues were identified, taking into account the ILO Code of practice on the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, as well as recent European Union directives on this subject. The findings of this work will be reviewed by a Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics: Occupational Injuries, to be held in March-April 1998. In view of the limited coverage of the traditional and most common sources of data in this field, namely the record-keeping activities of injury compensation schemes and labour inspectorates, as well as the recognized under-reporting of occupational injuries to these bodies, consideration is being given to other sources of data, such as surveys of households and establishments, as a means of obtaining supplementary data. In addition, the existing classifications of occupational injuries, which date back some 35 years, are being updated and expanded to ensure that they meet more effectively the current and expected needs of those who are responsible for developing and monitoring accident prevention programmes, as well as to increase the scope and effectiveness of accident investigations.

Emphasis continued to be placed on the development of statistics of child labour. Based on the findings of the methodological experiments carried out in the previous biennium as part of the interdepartmental project on the elimination of child labour, as well as on the statistical results of more recent national surveys, global and regional estimates of child labour were produced for the first time in 1996. These estimates have received broad international recognition and have been widely quoted as official ILO figures. The innovative statistical techniques developed in preceding biennia were refined and used to conduct new national surveys in several countries. The results of these activities were consolidated in a report on the methodology of child labour surveys and statistics.[26] This work provided the basis for the formulation of a new project, in collaboration with ILO-IPEC, under which child labour surveys will be conducted in some 40 countries over the next five years. Towards the end of the biennium, statistics were also developed on the numbers of children involved in hazardous activities.[27]

The **world's population of working children** has yet to be counted accurately. Because it is often illegal and clandestine, child labour lies beyond the reach of conventional labour statistics. However, based in part on the pioneering methodologies and survey instruments refined and tested in *Ghana*, *India*, *Pakistan*, *Senegal* and *Turkey* and used in conducting national surveys in several countries, the ILO produced estimates of child labour, which reveal a tragedy of far greater magnitude than previously supposed:

- the estimates show that worldwide some 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 (or around one-quarter of all children in that age group) work, 120 million of them in full-time work, with the rest working part time;
- some 61 per cent of this total (153 million children) are in Asia, 32 per cent (80 million) in Africa and 7 per cent (17.5 million) in Latin America;
- child labour also exists in many industrialized countries and is emerging in Eastern European and Asian transition countries.

Measuring underemployment

Although there have been international statistical standards on underemployment since 1957, few countries measure it in their national statistics. Yet estimates of employment and unemployment are often insufficient to understand national labour

market situations, and measures of other aspects of labour market performance, such as underemployment, are necessary. This is particularly the case in developing countries, where many persons without work engage in marginal economic activities. Current international standards only cover *visible* underemployment, the definition of which is vague and leaves much room for differences of interpretation. An action programme was carried out during the biennium with the objectives of agreeing on:

- a definition of *visible* underemployment that is based on clearer and more precise criteria so that international comparisons are possible; and
- a broader definition of underemployment, encompassing other forms of underemployment.

Central to the work of the action programme was the holding of a Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics in October 1997. A report was prepared for the Meeting, addressing the conceptual and measurement issues of the subject. Statistical data on underemployment were compiled for 37 countries.[28] The issues involved were also discussed at other informal meetings organized by the ILO and attended by officials from national bureaus of statistics, as well as at meetings organized by the OECD and EUROSTAT. Based on the outcome of the Meeting of Experts, a report is being prepared for submission to the 16th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, to be held in October 1998, which will revise the current standards on the subject.

The outcome of this action programme is expected to result in the more widespread and effective measurement of both visible underemployment and a broader measure of underemployment, leading to a better understanding of national labour market problems, as well as an improved basis for international comparisons. Developing countries will probably benefit the most from the statistical recommendations that are made, although European Union countries are likely to be the first to apply them, as they have done in the case of other international recommendations on labour statistics.

Measurement of income from employment

Existing wage statistics are mostly limited to regular paid employment, with very little information being generated on the income accruing from atypical or non-standard forms of employment. Where statistics of income from self-employment have been compiled, they follow a variety of concepts and methodologies and are often not sufficiently exploited. With a view to helping member States produce statistics which more fully measure the income accruing to the whole working population, including the self-employed and employees with non-regular patterns of work, an action programme was undertaken on the measurement of income from employment.

National practices in some 70 countries were reviewed and information was gathered on feasible data sources, data collection methods, concepts and the availability of data. Studies were also carried out of the situation in India, Latin America and

Income from employment is the income generated by a person's economic activity, whether in paid employment or self-employment. Current international statistical standards related to the measurement of income from employment are limited to statistics of earnings and household income. Neither of them provides adequate statistical guidelines on the measurement of the full income accruing to workers by virtue of their employment situation, including certain wage and non-wage benefits which supplement regular earnings, as well as income from atypical and non-standard forms of paid work, and income from self-employment.

Ghana.[29] A report was then prepared for the Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics, held in October 1997. Based on the outcome of this Meeting, a report was prepared for the 16th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, to be held in October 1998, which will adopt standards on the subject.

Policies and programmes for development

One of the ILO's most tangible contributions to the eradication of poverty is the assistance that it provides to constituents for the development of employment promotion policies and programmes. The activities carried out in this field concentrate on employment-intensive growth programmes and strategies which incorporate social protection for the workers concerned. These activities therefore contribute to the ILO's follow-up action to major United Nations conferences, such as the Social Summit and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Assistance was provided directly to member States for the development of a policy environment which is conducive to employment-intensive growth, at both the macro and sectoral levels. Policy advisory activities covered a number of countries, including Chile,[30] Egypt,[31] Peru and Uzbekistan.[32]

The financing available through the ILO's RBTC fund for poverty alleviation was used to undertake a variety of activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These activities were designed to combat poverty, particularly among disadvantaged groups, and to support the activities of employers' and workers' organizations in this connection. In one such activity, the Vice-President of the Grameen Bank provided training and advice in Egypt, which led to the setting up of a scheme to provide micro-finance to assist the rural poor in the creation of micro-enterprises. In another case, financing was provided for a research programme by the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers Associations (IUF) to investigate the particular problems of temporary and seasonal workers, especially in sugar cane production. Research was also undertaken in Latin America into the problems and trends of home work (see Chapter 3).

With a view to providing an alternative policy framework to encourage employment-intensive growth in Africa, a programme was launched on employment generation for poverty

Examples of poverty alleviation initiatives developed by member States

Policy advice resulted in important poverty alleviation initiatives being taken in a number of countries, including:

- *Egypt*, where complete revision of the existing labour force survey has provided reliable estimates of employment and unemployment, and a policy framework has been adopted, entitled *Job creation and poverty alleviation in Egypt: Strategy and programmes*, designed to create jobs to absorb the half million new entrants arriving on the labour market every year while maintaining the quality of employment;
- *Peru*, where employment promotion schemes were initiated on the Chilean model, particularly to assist unemployed youth in Lima and low-income heads of households, with emphasis on the organization of women workers; and
- *Uzbekistan*, where a social policy framework has been adopted, including the setting up of a Social Transformation Fund with support from the World Bank, designed to ensure that growth is rapid, sustained and employment intensive.

reduction, known as "Jobs for Africa". This programme was the focus of discussions at the Fifth Meeting of African Employment Planners, held in Pretoria in January 1997, which was followed by a process of broad consultation, including policy advisory missions to Cameroon, Mauritius, Senegal, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Focusing on policy-making and planning for employment creation, the programme will be launched in 1998 at the national level in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Further guidance on employment promotion in Africa was provided in a report covering various aspects of the performance of African economies over the past two decades, which presents a programme of action for employment-oriented growth.[33] The report emphasizes that Africa has no alternative but to embark on a process of sustained growth if it is to avoid continued marginalization. The process of reform has to be deepened by going beyond stabilization and structural adjustment programmes, and by launching investment-led growth strategies that maximize employment and reduce poverty. This can only be achieved if the social partners, member States and the international community join efforts to adopt a more coherent, high-quality employment-led development strategy which takes full advantage of the opportunities for economic growth through increased exports and foreign investment offered by the process of globalization.

Employment-intensive programmes

Partly as a result of the ILO's work in this area over the years, it is now increasingly widely recognized by governments, donors (including the World Bank and the Nordic coun-

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ILO employment-intensive programmes

The ILO's employment-intensive projects are among the best-known of its technical cooperation activities. For the past two decades, with strong donor support, they have had a profound influence on investment policies, employment and poverty reduction in over 35 developing countries, where as much as 70 per cent of public investment is in infrastructure. In total, more than $500 million has been invested in these projects, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs, building capacities in the private and public sectors and orienting investments towards badly needed, cost-effective and technically sound infrastructure works. Some of the major projects have been carried out in:

- *Cambodia*, where a major labour-based rural infrastructure development project, commenced in 1992, had by mid-1997 created 2.5 million workdays, trained more than 180 engineers and supervisors, and constructed or rehabilitated and established maintenance systems for 560 km of rural roads and 96 km of irrigation canals;
- *Ghana*, where 93 small enterprises were provided with training between 1987 and 1996 to construct and maintain some 1,500 km of feeder roads, with each firm employing some 150 workers;
- *Mozambique*, where the Feeder Roads Programme is estimated to employ some 6,500 workers, 20 per cent of whom are women, in 29 brigades which have rehabilitated nearly 2,400 km of feeder roads since 1989;
  and
- *Uganda*, where the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication has placed some 5,500 km of trunk roads under labour-based routine maintenance through local labour contractors from the villages close to the roads.

Externally-funded subregional projects are being established to assist in the development of employment-intensive programmes and provide advisory and capacity-building services. One such project, "Advisory Support, Information Services and Training for Labour-Based Infrastructure Programmes" (ASIST), has been instrumental in supporting and expanding ILO employment-intensive activities in eastern and southern Africa.

The biennium saw a number of **interesting developments in ILO-assisted employment-intensive programmes**, including:

- the establishment of associations of labour-based contractors in *Cambodia, Ghana, Lao People's Democratic Republic* and *Madagascar*, representing contractors which have been involved in ILO-assisted programmes and have benefited from the corresponding training;
- greater attention on the inclusion of women in employment-intensive infrastructure works, where men have tended to predominate, with women's participation reaching 37 per cent in programmes in *Botswana*, 25 per cent in *Madagascar* and up to 60 per cent in *Lesotho*; and
- the pioneering of community-based approaches to employment-intensive rural infrastructure projects, instead of relying on contractors as intermediaries, in a forestry project in the Kita district in *Mali* and the Dhaulagiri Irrigation Development Programme in *Nepal*, which have been beneficial in promoting organization and group negotiations in the informal sector in both cases.

tries) and the social partners that one important key to employment-intensive growth, particularly in the poorest countries, is the integration of employment policy and investment policy. This is particularly true of infrastructure projects, such as the construction of a viable road network, which is in itself a vital component of national development. The adoption of employment-intensive methods in such cases means that the countries concerned reap the full benefits of their investment in terms of employment generation, as well as ensuring that the technologies adopted are conducive to subsequent maintenance by local contractors.

The ILO's approach to employment-intensive programmes is unique in that it links employment promotion, private sector development and poverty alleviation, on the one hand, with social progress and empowerment on the other. While primarily focused on employment creation for poverty alleviation, these programmes also make a concrete contribution to the achievement of the ILO's two other priority objectives of the protection of workers and democratization through transparent public/private contract systems and enhanced popular participation. Training in labour-based techniques is provided to interested small and medium-sized enterprises. The successful ones are preselected and allowed to tender, but in exchange have to accept certain labour clauses relating to conditions of work.

During the biennium, policy and technical advisory services to assist in the establishment of employment-intensive investment policies and programmes for infrastructure development and maintenance were provided to Botswana, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Assistance in the promotion of existing programmes was also delivered to Cape Verde, Ghana, Mali, Nepal, Senegal, Sudan and Thailand.

Employment-intensive infrastructure programmes supported by the ILO expanded during the biennium in Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Mozambique and Zambia. In addition, major new project approvals were obtained for programmes in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Zambia. Programme formulation missions were also carried out in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania and Uganda. Nevertheless, political upheavals created difficulties for employment-intensive technical cooperation projects in Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone.[34]

The activities carried out to promote this approach at the national and regional levels included seminars held in India in January 1996 and Madagascar in May 1996, in which emphasis was placed on encouraging social and economic democracy through employment-

National courses in the use of labour-intensive methods

Labour-intensive methods are beginning to be taught in a number of African and Asian educational institutions, including:

- **University of Natal, *South Africa***, which has developed course modules for a civil engineering course on local resource-based technology, with the first seminar being held at the end of 1997;
- **University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, *Ghana***, which is modifying its undergraduate curricula to integrate concepts of technology choice and labour-based approaches to infrastructure development and maintenance;
- **University of Addis Ababa, *Ethiopia***, which organized an orientation course on labour-intensive technology in July 1997 for 18 participants;
- **University of Dar es Salaam, *United Republic of Tanzania***, which has introduced a course on labour-based road construction and maintenance at the undergraduate level;
- **Hanoi University of Transport and Communications (HUTC), *Viet Nam***, which has organized a two-day seminar on training programmes for rural development with emphasis on low-cost roads and means of transport and a short course on rural infrastructure development for engineers working in transport companies; and
- **School of Communication and Transport (SCT) and National Polytechnic Institute (NPI), *Lao People's Democratic Republic***, which have commenced training for trainers and study tours on labour-based construction methods.

These courses serve as an entry point for the ILO to introduce not only employment-related subjects, but also relevant labour standards, particularly those dealing with conditions of work and worker protection.

intensive policies in such fields as irrigation and the construction and maintenance of rural roads. Feasibility studies on the creation of Employment and Investment Policy Units were also undertaken in Madagascar, West Bengal (India) and Uganda.

With a view to the more widespread utilization of labour-intensive techniques, cooperation programmes were undertaken with eight African higher education institutions and five Asian institutions to strengthen their research and training capacities in labour-intensive technologies (see box). Agreement was also reached with the World Bank-supported AGETIP programme *(Agence d'Exécution de Travaux d'Intérêt Public contre le Sous-Emploi)* on the content of training curricula for small and medium-sized enterprises and their associations in French-speaking Africa. The training materials are under preparation.[35] Guidance for policy-makers and those responsible for programme planning and implementation was developed in the form of guidelines on appropriate labour legislation and the practical application of labour standards in employment-intensive programmes.[36] These guidelines were discussed and reviewed at a tripartite meeting held in Uganda in October 1997.[37] Papers containing guidance on local-level planning for improved accessibility to basic goods, services and productive employment were also prepared.[38]

Broad acceptance of the employment-intensive approach was further demonstrated by the publication of a World Bank technical paper concerning the large-scale application of employment-intensive approaches to road building,[39] the establishment of collaboration agreements in the field of rural transport, and the training of public sector agencies in the implementation of employment-intensive infrastructure works through social funds. Experience in this field was also synthesized in summary guidelines for entrepreneurship development programmes in the labour-based public works sector, which will be reviewed by the World Bank.[40]

Evaluation of an urban infrastructure programme

Hanna Nassif is one of over 40 unplanned settlements in Dar es Salaam with pressing infrastructure needs, including roads and drainage to avert the risk of flooding. A community-based labour-intensive upgrading project for Hanna Nassif was commenced in the biennium 1994-95. By August 1996, it had resulted in the establishment of a community-based organization, the construction of one kilometre of road, 1.5 kilometres of side drains and 600 metres of main drain, with the creation of nearly 25,000 days of paid employment in which women accounted for 35 per cent of the workforce. The evaluation pointed to:

- a number of refinements required in the technical preparation of such projects;
- the success of the project in mobilizing the community to carry out the work, although, probably due to the innovative nature of the project, it has proven more difficult to motivate a broader sense of ownership by the community of the infrastructure created;
- the sound quality of the work carried out by unskilled workers;
- the value of the project in creating capacity in the local and city administration and raising awareness of the benefits of the approach through numerous site visits, studies, surveys and radio programmes; and
- the expansion of the project concept to similar programmes in Dar es Salaam and elsewhere, including the World Bank-financed Community Infrastructure Programme for seven settlements.

Urban employment

In recent years, both in the follow-up to the Habitat II Conference and in the context of the 1994-95 interdepartmental project on the urban informal sector, the ILO has been further developing and demonstrating approaches for the creation of employment in urban areas. These approaches target job creation in the informal sector and the adoption of employment-intensive methods for the construction of infrastructure, such as roads and drainage, which are in themselves important for the economic development of urban areas and the improvement of living conditions. Pilot activities showing how to put these approaches into practice have been undertaken in such countries as Burkina Faso, Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. Evaluations of these activities, such as that of the Hanna Nassif Community-based Urban Upgrading Project in Dar es Salaam (see box), have shown that demonstration projects have a positive impact, both in terms of mobilizing the community concerned and in stimulating interest in other communities in the techniques and approaches adopted.[41]

The **ILO-DECO project** has contributed to the development of the construction industry in several countries. Over its ten years of existence, it has been instrumental in the creation of over 250 enterprises in some 12 countries, generating more than 2,500 direct and indirect jobs and resulting in the construction of over 20,000 buildings roofed with local building materials.

One indication of the success of the project is that entrepreneurs and service partners in neighbouring countries have become more confident with the use of local building materials and have launched spontaneous activities for their production. The project also encourages enterprises which produce MCR tiles to diversify into other local building materials.

The ILO has also developed expertise in recent years in the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises in the construction industry using low-cost local raw materials, thereby facilitating access to affordable housing. One good example is the ILO-DECO project, which is operational in some 12 countries in Africa and Asia, and has concentrated over the past ten years on the production and use of micro-concrete roofing (MCR). This roofing technology, which can be easily duplicated locally,

Addressing urban employment issues: ILO participation in Habitat II

The two principal themes of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) were adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world. ILO participation in Habitat II focused on the key issue of urban employment, particularly through its organization of the Habitat II Dialogue event on the future of urban employment. As a result of the ILO's efforts, this issue was extensively covered in the Habitat Agenda, and specifically in its Global Plan of Action.

The text of the Habitat Agenda reflects the ILO's principal concerns of democracy, employment promotion and worker protection. It calls upon governments, *including local authorities, in partnership with all relevant interested parties, including workers' and employers' organizations, to stimulate productive employment opportunities and pursue the goal of ensuring quality jobs, and safeguard the basic rights and interests of workers and, to this end, freely promote respect for relevant Conventions of the International Labour Organization, including those on the prohibition of forced and child labour, freedom of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, and the principle of non-discrimination.* With reference to ILO standards, it calls on Governments to *facilitate the extension to the informal sector of the protection of human rights in the field of labour.*

As a result of the warm reception of its report by Habitat II, the ILO is in a stronger position to give effect to its approaches through an urban employment programme, which will consolidate ongoing initiatives in the areas of informal sector development and the employment-intensive upgrading of urban slums. It will also promote exchanges at the global policy level on what cities and poor urban communities can do to create jobs and protect conditions of work.

lends itself to simplification while maintaining high quality in the roofing of buildings. In some of the countries where the project has been in operation for a number of years, MCR tiles are the preferred roofing material. One good illustration of the effectiveness of the project is that MCR tiles are due to be used in the near future in Nepal for the roofing of 550 primary schools.

The ILO's participation in the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements — Habitat II (Istanbul, June 1996) offered an opportunity to present these policies and programmes to a broad public, including policy-makers and donors. The conclusions of the ILO's report to the Conference,[42] in addition to being widely quoted in the international press, have been warmly heralded by urban policy-makers around the world, with a consequent increase in requests for policy advice and assistance.

The ILO's visibility in international fora on urban poverty and employment issues was consolidated through its participation in the first and second International Conferences on Urban Poverty, held in Recife in March 1996 and Florence in November 1997 respectively, and the Eurocities Meeting on European Cities as Engines of Job Creation, held in Bilbao in October 1996. The impetus provided by these activities led to requests to formulate technical cooperation project proposals and provide technical advice on the community-based upgrading of urban poor communities in Albania, Indonesia, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania and Togo. Training and technical advisory support for project development was also provided in Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Philippines, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania.

Policy advice for the wider replication of this approach to urban employment creation and poverty alleviation was also provided in the form of guidelines and publications. These included guidelines on employment-intensive participatory approaches to infrastructure investment for the alleviation of urban poverty, which were finalized and distributed to the

ILO field structure to strengthen the provision of technical support to constituents.[43] Training materials on the urban informal sector for the use of municipal officials are also under development and will be completed in 1998.[44] Further guidance is provided in publications assessing current strategies towards urban poverty and the informal sector[45] and the informalization of advanced market economies.[46] Furthermore, action-oriented research carried out in the United Republic of Tanzania identified a number of indirect linkages between informal enterprises and infrastructure improvements, such as the building of roads and drains.[47] These include improved accessibility, greater competition from micro-enterprises in neighbouring districts and better health conditions as sources of diseases such as malaria are removed. It also found that workers in employment-intensive projects sometimes use their earnings to start micro-enterprises.

Entrepreneurship and management development

It is now almost universally acknowledged that most new jobs are created in the private sector, and particularly by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Many ILO member States have adopted wide-ranging plans and programmes to promote and assist SMEs. These are already well-established in such countries as the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Japan. More recent strategies have been adopted, often with ILO assistance, in Colombia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia and South Africa, among other countries. However, in many member States, the efforts of small-scale entrepreneurs are still hindered by legal and administrative constraints, a lack of the required skills, and difficulties in obtaining the necessary support services, including access to credit, market information and new technology.

The ILO continued to pursue the following objectives in this field: the development of a policy and legislative environment which facilitates the establishment and growth of private enterprises; the promotion of sound management practices and the improvement of productivity; the design and implementation of entrepreneurship training programmes; the development of support services for small and micro-enterprises; and the adoption of policies and measures that are instrumental in upgrading informal sector enterprises and in facilitating their development in the formal economy.

As a follow-up to the Social Summit, and in order to focus attention and resources more effectively on the achievement of these objectives, the ILO decided in 1997 to launch an International Small Enterprise Programme (ISEP), designed to provide focus for ILO and donor support to small enterprise development. The blueprint for ISEP action will be the Recommendation on general

A major event during the biennium in the field of entrepreneurship and management development was the discussion at the 85th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1997 on **general conditions to stimulate job creation in small and medium-sized enterprises**. It was concluded that a Recommendation should be adopted by the Conference on this subject in 1998.

During the discussion, the speakers emphasized the importance of SMEs in the economies of all countries and in the creation of jobs in a context of high levels of unemployment. Many participants referred to the dynamism and resilience of SMEs and the need to develop a business-friendly environment which removes administrative and other constraints on their development. Others attached importance to the quality of employment as an integral part of a strategy to promote efficient and competitive SMEs, which probably employ the majority of the world's workforce. This involves promoting good working conditions, social protection, security, workers' representation and equal opportunities.

Best practice in business development services

For several decades now, many agencies, in both industrialized and developing countries, have been working in the field of non-financial support services for small enterprises. However, until recently, this broad experience had not been assessed in a comprehensive and systematic manner.

The Committee of Donor Agencies for Small Enterprise Development therefore decided to set up a working group to synthesize the major lessons learned and to develop benchmarks against which future efforts could be measured. Headed by the ILO, the working group analysed the experience and results of a wide variety of programmes and projects in such areas as basic business training, counselling and advice, the improvement of working conditions, institutional capacity building and macro-level support interventions.

The resulting report identified a number of important principles to improve the effectiveness of business development services, including:

- their organization on a businesslike basis, with payment by clients for the services received;
- the use and development of specialized indigenous agencies to achieve greater sustainability and cost-effectiveness;
- the importance of a participatory approach in the planning and implementation of support programmes, to create a feeling of ownership and ensure they are adapted to the needs of clients; and
- the development of criteria for the evaluation of support programmes.

The report is now being used by many agencies active in the promotion of small enterprises, including the World Bank, UNDP and bilateral agencies. It will form the basis of a major international conference to be held in Brazil towards the end of 1998.

conditions to stimulate job creation in SMEs, which is likely to be adopted by the Conference in 1998. Building on the networks that the ILO has already established, ISEP will work with entrepreneurs, government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations and other NGOs, universities and business schools. It will advise decision-makers on economic and regulatory policy options, help build local capacity to support small enterprises, identify and apply best practice and produce and use training packages to disseminate experience throughout the world. Particular emphasis will be laid in these activities on improving working conditions, assisting women entrepreneurs and supporting vulnerable groups, such as youth, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and groups and countries affected by armed conflict.

The first **ILO Enterprise Forum** was organized in November 1996, bringing together some 600 entrepreneurs and employers' representatives, as well as representatives of workers' organizations, governments and NGOs from 97 countries to discuss the theme "promoting social progress and enterprise competitiveness in a global economy".

The discussions at the Enterprise Forum reflected the growing acknowledgement of the important role played by enterprises, not only in employment creation, but also in relation to other fundamental ILO concerns. In particular, they highlighted the need for the social partners and civil society to work together with enterprises to achieve the twin objectives of economic efficiency and social protection. A second Enterprise Forum is planned for November 1999.

During the biennium, the assistance provided to member States for the development of national small enterprise promotion strategies included a number of joint missions with other international organizations. In collaboration with the World Bank, assistance was provided to the Government of Madagascar to develop a private enterprise promotion programme. The assistance offered in partnership with UNIDO included the provision of policy advice to the Government of Bulgaria on the development of entrepreneurship education and to Cambodia on small business development policies and programmes. Guidance for the formulation of SME development strategies was delivered jointly with UNDP to a number of countries, including Jordan,

To date, more than 100,000 entrepreneurs have benefited from the **SIYB programme**. Evaluations have shown that, of participating entrepreneurs:

- 90 per cent improve their knowledge of basic business skills;
- 65 per cent apply these skills with visible results, such as higher than average growth rates and an increase in the numbers of their employees; and
- in Africa, on average 60 per cent of the beneficiaries have been women, while gender participation in other regions has also been well balanced.

Malawi and South Africa. The ILO also participated in a review of four small enterprise development programmes for women undertaken by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in the Middle East. The ILO's advice on how to make the programmes more effective was welcomed and provided a basis for strengthened collaboration between the two organizations in similar programmes.

Further guidance on the development of a supportive small business environment is contained in a practical manual, which was developed as a tool for policy-makers and small enterprise development practitioners.[48] The manual provides a summary of the lessons learned over several decades of training and development activities for the entrepreneur-managers of small enterprises, with emphasis on the combinations of approaches required at the various stages of the business development process. The ILO also played a leading role in the rapidly expanding field of small business development services through its participation in the Committee of Donor Agencies for Small Enterprise Development, which brings together around fifty donors, including the World Bank, regional development banks and most bilateral donors. In recognition of its broad experience in this area, the ILO was selected to head a working group set up to identify best practice in the provision of small business development services and the major lessons learned to date.[49]

An important activity in the effort to improve entrepreneurial skills worldwide continued to be the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training programme.[50] The focus was on consolidating and expanding the use of the programme in English-speaking Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and on launching it in French-speaking African countries. SIYB materials, which have now been used in some 70 countries, were further updated and improved during the biennium to optimize their impact on business performance and employment generation.[51] In the South Pacific, SIYB materials were adapted for use in distance learning. The project commenced recently in South Africa gives some idea of the approach adopted in SIYB projects. During the biennium, the ILO introduced SIYB programmes to small enterprise support organizations in South Africa. The materials and training programmes were tested, adapted to the South African environment and translated into a number of local languages, including Zulu, Xhosa and Sotho. During the pilot period, 16 organizations participated in the trials. After only six months, 75 other organizations had been placed on the waiting list to benefit from the expanded project.

Activities to help improve productivity were undertaken in nearly 30 countries. The assistance provided consisted mainly of the dissemination of information on productivity improvement issues and the provision of training and advisory services to a series of government and NGO clients, including management development and productivity institutions, business schools, employers' organizations and, increasingly, workers' organizations. The approach adopted in all of these activities is that productivity is an issue that concerns and benefits all of those involved in the production process, including manage-

Bringing together the concepts of productivity and quality, **the ILO's new modular training and consulting programme** encapsulates the increasingly manifest commitment by the most productive companies and many governments to promote a better quality of working life, greater participation by the workforce, market economy principles, individual initiative and creativity, and human-oriented management styles and practices. In so doing, it recognizes the importance of productivity improvement for the promotion of employment and participation, human resources development, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

The new modular programme is also noteworthy for the following reasons:

- the modules have been prepared by 27 internationally recognized experts from over a dozen countries;
- it was produced in collaboration with the Asian Productivity Organization, which assists and maintains close relations with government productivity organizations in 18 Asian countries;
- it benefited from an extended launch process, consisting of two subregional seminars for directors of national productivity organizations in East Asian countries, as well as national seminars in Botswana, Bulgaria, Colombia, Mauritius, Poland, the Russian Federation and Uganda;
- its translation into other languages, including Chinese, Czech and Russian, is already under preparation.

ment, workers and society at large. To emphasize the important role of the workforce as partners in productivity improvement, studies were prepared on the role of workers as stakeholders in productivity and on gainsharing from productivity improvements.[52] A regional workshop on productivity improvement was also held in Zimbabwe in July 1997 for African trade union leaders.

In support of this work, information, guidelines and training materials on productivity issues continued to be produced and refined. An important activity in this respect was the development, publication and launching of a modular programme, in cooperation with the Asian Productivity Organization, on productivity and quality management.[53] The ILO's handbook on productivity management,[54] which describes the basic principles and techniques involved, has now been translated into some 15 languages, with Arabic and Hungarian versions under preparation. A team of leading experts, practitioners and academics was also brought together to produce a revised edition of the ILO's popular guide to management consulting, which has been extended to cover such important new issues as consulting for productivity, privatization, quality assurance in consulting and information technology in consulting firms.[55] An important aspect of the improvement of productivity almost everywhere is the manner in which know-how is transferred between countries. Guidelines were therefore produced to help constituents identify the best channels for the transfer of knowledge and to provide guidance on the types of practices that can be incorporated most effectively from one business culture to another.[56]

Privatization

Privatization and restructuring processes are being carried out in many member States, and particularly in transition countries. Yet there is increasing concern among constituents at the employment and social effects of these processes, particularly where they are carried out without an appropriate legal, financial and institutional framework. An *Interdepartmental Action Programme on Privatization, Restructuring and Economic Democracy* (IPPRED) was therefore undertaken with the objective of developing a participatory, tripartite approach to privatization and restructuring in order to achieve a smoother transition from a bureaucratic to an entrepreneurial culture, taking into account both social considerations and the need for enterprises to be competitive.

Employee ownership has been one of the approaches to privatization adopted extensively in many Central and Eastern European countries. A study carried out in the context of the Interdepartmental Action Programme on Privatization, Restructuring and Economic Democracy (IPPRED) has found a number of advantages to this approach, including the political motivation of achieving a better social and political consensus on privatization. Some encouraging results of this method of privatization include the following:

- employee-owned firms in *Ukraine* have been found to be more productive and less affected by labour inefficiency than other firms;
- surveys of more than 200 companies in *Hungary* with employee stock option plans (ESOPs) show that they perform better and are more profitable than the national average;
- a similar result was found for 260 management-employee buy-outs in *Romania*;
- employee-owned firms often experience more moderate wage demands, as well as a powerful internal funding process, although they sometimes experience greater difficulties than other firms in obtaining external capital.

A number of studies were carried out [57] to examine the policies and institutions involved in privatization, the methods adopted (particularly in the case of public utilities and social services), management and worker buy-outs,[58] their management development implications, the integration of social concerns through provisions in labour legislation and industrial relations machinery, and the splitting up of public enterprises into small and medium-sized enterprises. A number of tripartite seminars were held to provide opportunities for an exchange of views on experiences of privatization and restructuring. These contributed to a better understanding by government participants of the important role that can be played in these processes by employers' and workers' organizations, particularly where they are involved from the planning stage. They also helped employers' and workers' organizations clarify the respective roles that they can play in privatization and restructuring processes.

The lessons learned from the seminars and case studies will be synthesized in a manual for use by constitutents and ILO staff. The manual, which will be finalized in 1998, will contain guidelines to facilitate a participative approach to privatization and restructuring processes. A training package was produced for those directly involved in the planning and management of these processes for use in workshops and courses.[59]

Access to finance

The difficulties experienced by many enterprises and associations in gaining access to finance remain an important obstacle to their growth and the realization of their potential for job creation. Assistance in the development of solutions to this problem continued to be provided in the form of research and advisory activities. Technical advisory services were provided to a number of countries, including China, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. In China, based on the experience from several ILO guarantee fund projects, the advice provided focused on the use of guarantee funds to promote the development of SMEs. The Government of Zambia was assisted in drafting model leasing contracts for small building contractors and was advised on the development of an appropriate financial institution. The assistance provided to constituents in the field of microfinance also took the form of technical cooperation projects in several countries, including Cambodia, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea and Zimbabwe, as well as the West African subregion.

Assistance in the field of **microfinance** was provided through technical cooperation projects in a number of countries, including:

- *Cambodia*, where the Association of Cambodian Local Economic Development Agencies developed into a fully self-financing organization offering financial services and business training and advice to micro- and small enterprise clients, 90 per cent of which are run by women;
- *Madagascar*, where the ILO is helping small farmers create savings and credit associations and establish a national apex organization;
- *Zimbabwe*, where the Social Development Fund, managed by the Ministry of Labour, has recently opened a micro-finance facility to fund very small start-up ventures, particularly by workers who have lost their jobs as a result of structural adjustment measures; and
- *seven West African countries*, where the ILO, in partnership with the regional central bank, operates a programme to support decentralized financial systems, such as village banks and women's savings groups, through the dissemination of best practices, training, advisory services and the establishment in each of the countries of a forum on micro-finance, where NGO networks, banks, governments, the central bank and donors meet to harmonize approaches.

This work was supported by research activities, including the preparation of working papers to provide guidance on specific aspects of the design and management of credit funds and guarantee funds.[60] As part of the ILO's participation in the Donors' Working Group on Financial Sector Development, which brings together some 30 donor agencies, a study was prepared on collateral and collateral substitutes, with a view to informing financial institutions of the comparative costs (and risks) of the different ways of securing small business loans.[61] The study confirmed the importance of the lack of collateral as a constraint for many small and micro-enterprises, and especially for new entrants to the financial market. The best-known collateral substitutes are joint liability and credit scoring, although the transaction costs involved may prove a major obstacle to their more widespread application.

In an innovative research programme aimed at countries undergoing structural adjustment and financial sector reform, such as Ghana, Benin, Senegal and Zimbabwe, steering committees were set up, with the Central Bank acting as the secretariat to supervise the work by local researchers. The project is designed to promote understanding of the impact of financial sector liberalization on the access to financial services of small and micro-enterprises. This understanding should help ensure that future liberalization policies are more sensitive to the needs of the poor.

The ILO's approach to the use of microfinance for the promotion of employment was given greater exposure through its participation in the Microcredit Summit held in Washington in February 1997 and in the World Bank-led Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP). The CGAP brings together some 25 bi- and multilateral organizations involved in microfinance. Its objectives are to disseminate good practice in microfinance among the donor community, coordinate donor activities in this field and test innovative approaches to microfinance. It provides the ILO with an opportunity to share its experience in this area with other major actors and donors.

Cooperatives

Cooperative enterprises play an important role in providing income and sustainable employment for large numbers of people, particularly in rural areas and in countries in transition, where the capacity of governments to ensure the supply of jobs, services and products to

the local population is diminishing rapidly. Cooperative enterprises and associations are also of great importance in industrialized countries, particularly in agriculture, marketing, retailing and the provision of social services, including insurance. However, cooperatives in general are facing something of an identity crisis. In developing and transition countries, with receding state control and support, they are having to become more self-sufficient and capable of survival in the private sector. In industrialized countries, their business success has often been to the detriment of their social identity.

The objective of the ILO's activities in this area is the creation and strengthening of democratically organized and managed cooperative enterprises which not only provide employment and other services for their members, but also take into account the needs of the communities in which they operate. These activities focused on the following issues:

- helping member States create a legal and regulatory environment in which independent democratic cooperatives can grow and become competitive and sustainable;
- developing cooperative human resources;
- alleviating poverty; and
- supporting self-reliance of indigenous and tribal peoples.

The activities undertaken to establish and strengthen social service cooperatives are described in Chapter 3. Guidance was also provided to constituents through publications on industrial relations and cooperatives [62] and on the creation of a favourable climate and conditions for cooperative development in Central and Eastern Europe and in Latin America.[63]

In the context of the COOPREFORM programme, advisory missions were carried out in some 20 countries during the biennium, mainly in Africa and Asia, to assist in the formulation of cooperative legislation that is in tune with local needs and circumstances. These advisory services were provided in consultation with those directly affected, thereby contributing to the process of democratization in the countries and strengthening the autonomy of cooperative movements. As set out in the Cooperatives (Developing Countries) Recommendation, 1966 (No. 127), the assistance provided emphasized the independence of cooperatives from state involvement and the development of democratic procedures to ensure that they act in accordance with the interests of their members. The advice provided on cooperative policy led to the adoption of official policy papers on cooperative development in Mali in 1996 and Kenya in 1997. As a reference tool to support this work, examples of cooperative legislation continued to be entered into the ILO's NATLEX database (see Chapter 1), which now contains over 400 entries relating to cooperatives from nearly all member States.

The international cooperative movement attaches particular importance to the training and edu-

Countries to which assistance was provided for the development of new or revised cooperative legislation included:

- *China*, where the revised draft law on agricultural supply and marketing cooperatives is under examination by the Government with a view to its adoption in the near future;
- *Fiji*, where the revised cooperative legislation adopted in 1996 provides for greater autonomy of cooperatives from state involvement;
- *Mongolia*, where legislation reforming consumer cooperatives was adopted in 1996 and assistance is being provided with the reform of the law governing agricultural cooperatives;
- *Namibia*, where the new cooperative legislation adopted in 1996 guarantees the independence of cooperatives and confines the State to an administrative role, including registration; and
- *Niger*, where the revised legislation adopted in 1996 greatly reduces state control and support for rural cooperatives and reforms their organization.

cation of its members. Support continued to be provided to cooperative educational and training institutions through the COOPNET programme, which covered nearly 30 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Central America and the Andean region. With considerable support from development partners in Canada, Denmark, Germany, Israel and Sweden, and in partnership with the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), the programme develops networking between cooperative training institutions through the provision of information, advice and consultancy services, as well as the organization of national and subregional workshops. In Latin America, one of the programme's networking activities has consisted of the establishment of a multimedia information service called *"Coopnet al día"*, which is available on the Internet (http://www.oit.or.cr/hp-coop/coopdia.htm). To improve gender awareness among cooperative trainers, COOPNET's gender sensitization package was published in Spanish during the biennium.[64]

Over the years, the ACOPAM programme, which focuses on the French-speaking countries of sub-Saharan Africa, has proven very successful in promoting the achievement of food security and the management of resources in an environmentally friendly manner. The methodology applied is based on the use of local implementing partners and the involvement of the beneficiaries, through grass-roots cooperative organizations in rural areas, from the initial design stage of all activities. Although the programme initially concentrated on the achievement of food security at the local level through the establishment of cereal banks and marketing cooperatives, it has expanded to cover gender issues, cooperative finance and natural resource management, including the management of irrigated and wooded areas and agricultural land. The action taken to ensure that women benefit from ACOPAM projects has included an increasing number of projects directed specifically at women, including the development of income-earning opportunities of various types and credit schemes for women, as well as measures to promote their participation and raise their profile in other projects. These have often included greater efforts by project animators to organize women so that they are involved throughout the design and implementation of the projects. An analysis was published of the situation of women in the countries concerned, their participation in development projects and the experience acquired in ensuring that they benefit to the same extent as men from development activities.[65]

The INDISCO programme applies a similar methodology to indigenous and tribal peoples with a view to improving their socio-economic conditions through the promotion of cooperatives and other self-help organizations. The programme is

INDISCO activities in India have included projects in:

- *Orissa*, covering ten villages, which has generated income and employment through small-scale cooperatives engaged in leaf-cup making, rope making, bicycle repairs, village shops and other forest-based activities;
- *Madhya Pradesh*, covering nine tribal villages, which has developed income-generating activities such as leaf-cup and plate making, doll making, sewing, tile making and tree nurseries;
- *Bihar*, covering nine tribal villages, which has concentrated on the development of water resources to enhance agricultural productivity, including check-dams, wells and irrigation schemes, as well as income-generating activities such as mat weaving, trading and tree nurseries; and
- *Gujarat*, also covering nine tribal villages, which has focused on agricultural development through the introduction of low-cost irrigation schemes in combination with an extensive afforestation programme aimed at planting around 300,000 trees, with the result that the incomes of 70 per cent of the tribal households covered by the project have more than doubled.

designed to support the application of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169). During the biennium, it expanded to Central America and Viet Nam and intensified its activities in India and the Philippines, where it assisted in the establishment of around 100 grass-roots organizations of indigenous peoples in each country. The programme also addresses such issues as involuntary displacement and environmental protection. Based on the establishment of grass-roots organizations of tribal peoples, the projects focus on the development of income-generating activities, particularly those related to the use of natural resources and the management of ancestral domains in the Philippines. They also emphasize the provision of literacy and technical training, the development and management of revolving loan funds and the organization of health services, including check-up and immunization camps.

The informal sector

Informal sector enterprises constitute an important segment of the private sector in many developing countries, often exceeding in number larger formal enterprises. They make a significant contribution to employment and GNP, and often help soften the negative employment effects of structural adjustment programmes. They often constitute the main source of income for disadvantaged groups. However, most informal sector enterprises operate under precarious conditions and few have been able to "upgrade" to the formal economy. In addition, they frequently face constraints such as low productivity (due to the use of inappropriate technologies), limited access to profitable markets and an inability to cope with the globalization of markets, difficulties in securing credit and the absence of a supportive policy and legislative environment.

The overall objectives of ILO activities focusing on the informal sector are the improved performance of micro-enterprises and the adaptation of the institutional, administrative and legal environment to encourage their development in the formal economy. The assistance provided in a number of African countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Niger, Rwanda and Senegal, concentrated on promoting an enabling environment for informal sector enterprises. An examination of the situation of the informal sector, and policies affecting it, in each of these countries [66] showed that the constraints experienced by the enterprises concerned could be reduced through the adoption of simplified administrative procedures, a reduction in labour costs and more favourable fiscal measures. Another promotional measure for small enterprises is to avoid the setting of minimum requirements for incentives such as advantageous duty rates on the import of equipment, export facilities and subsidies, or the possibility of tendering for government contracts.

Building on the methodology developed by the interdepartmental project carried out in the biennium 1994-95, many activities concentrated on helping informal sector enterprises raise their productivity, progressively extending social protection to these enterprises and improving their conditions of work. As a follow-up to the work initiated under the interdepartmental project during the previous biennium, a seminar was organized in each of the cities covered by the project — Bogota, Dar es Salaam and Manila — and the project advisory committees established for the project continued to function. These committees are composed of ILO tripartite constituents, as well as representatives of informal sector associations,

Informal sector access to information

Support for informal sector enterprises in *Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua* and *Panama* is provided through the PROMICRO project, the objectives of which include strengthening associations of micro-enterprises, improving the access of micro-enterprises to information and disseminating innovative approaches to the promotion of micro-enterprises. The project's interventions cover all the issues affecting micro-enterprises, including the regulatory environment, skills and management training, finance and access to business development services in such fields as technology, marketing and business plans. The project works through national micro-enterprise projects and programmes through their regional fora, national associations of micro-entrepreneurs which are members of the Central American Committee of Micro-enterprises (COCEMI), as well as NGOs, Chambers of Commerce, municipalities and local associations.

As PROMICRO has expanded in scope and associations of micro-entrepreneurs in the region have become better organized, the project has pursued the priority objective of improving the dissemination and sharing of information among micro-enterprises through interconnected computerized databases. A Web site has therefore been created on the Internet under the title of the Information System for the Promotion of Micro-enterprises (http://www.sipromicro.or.cr). The site offers a wide range of information, including major events, ongoing projects, economic data, counselling services, bibliographical references and interactive pages on thematic issues. It also allows enterprises to negotiate contracts with other members. It has been very successful in terms of "hits", with over 1,000 requests for information every month.

The project offers informal sector operators the possibility, like their larger counterparts in the formal sector, to use the most advanced technology to become part of the globalized economy. Through the Web site, they will be able to take advantage of the Internet to avail themselves of export opportunities and achieve economies of scale by teaming up with other partners to meet high-volume orders.

research institutions and NGOs. In Bogota, the project activities initiated under the interdepartmental project, including advocacy on behalf of micro-entrepreneurs, pilot training activities and the further development of self-help associations, continued to operate with funds raised in Colombia from public and private sources.[67] The experience gained by the ILO in this field, and in the establishment of the Central American Committee of Micro-enterprises (COCEMI), also continued to be applied with particular success in other projects in Latin America.[68]

Action-oriented research was undertaken on improving the sustainability of service providers to micro-enterprises through the strengthening of private sector linkages, the promotion of associations of informal sector operators and assistance in the establishment of private and semi-private support organizations.[69] Activities were also undertaken in a number of countries, including Ghana, Kenya and Togo, to develop specific support services adapted to the perceived needs of small and micro-enterprises, rather than adapting services, such as management training, from the approaches used for larger enterprises. The services developed include exchange visits to other companies by groups of micro-entrepreneurs, rapid market appraisal, the organization of mini-trade shows, participatory technology development and various innovative methods of disseminating information, such as the publication of newspapers for

Pilot private sector service providers to micro- and small enterprises (MSEs) have been set up in the following countries:

- *Ghana*, where over 20 MSEs have been shown how to carry out rapid market appraisals, with the result that the businesses have expanded and customers are more satisfied with their products: fora in which MSEs and their customers can meet have also led to improved product design, such as new farm implements;
- *Kenya*, where "package tours" have been sold to over 100 MSEs to visit more advanced companies, with the benefits including safer working practices, improved employer-employee relations, and increased profitability and employment; and

- *Uganda*, where a range of publications for MSEs have been launched at the national and provincial levels and over 20 local private sector trainers have been instructed in how to market their services and deliver more appropriate training to MSEs.

The approach is being replicated in *Benin, Cambodia, Gambia, the United Republic of Tanzania* and *Zimbabwe*, with the service providers forming a network through the Internet for the exchange of experience.

small businesses financed through advertising. Because these services are perceived as being useful, the entrepreneurs are willing to pay for them, which increases their sustainability. The experience acquired in this field has been documented in a series of papers, which will be made available on a CD-ROM during the course of 1998.

Other technical cooperation activities were carried out in a number of countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Gambia, Honduras, Jordan, Kenya, Morocco, Tunisia and Uganda. In many of the countries concerned, assistance was provided in the establishment of business centres for the provision of a range of services to micro-entrepreneurs. These centres are set up as pilot projects, with a view to their multiplication in other areas of the countries. Where possible, they are designed to be financially sustainable by the end of the project by selling some of the services that they provide and by handling a number of commercial transactions, such as marketing and the sale of equipment, to finance other services for which they are unlikely to be able to cover the cost through payments by clients. The staff of the four centres set up in Bosnia and Herzegovina is representative of the various political and religious components of the country, as a contribution to bringing the communities together in the world of work and enhancing political stability. In Jordan, the technical assistance provided concentrated on the development of handicraft projects, especially for women workers. This included the strengthening of handicraft centres, facilitating their access to markets and the provision of training for the workers involved.

Countries in which pilot projects have been commenced for the **establishment of business centres** include:

- Morocco, where the centre in Setta has been instrumental in the creation of 25 micro-enterprises in its first year; and
- *Tunisia*, where the centre established in Jendouba in the north of the country has succeeded in attracting considerable interest from development partners, such as banks, and, in its first 18 months, assisted in the establishment of 35 micro-enterprises.

The above centres were designed as models for replication elsewhere in the countries concerned.

An important aspect of the assistance provided for the development of informal sector enterprises includes the mobilization of microcredit schemes. Access to credit is one of the services provided by most of the support centres described above, often as part of a package including other services, such as training and counselling.

Women entrepreneurs face more constraints than men in the creation and running of micro-enterprises. In addition to the traditional informal sector constraints, such as difficulties in gaining access to credit and training, women also have to cope with the problems of fulfilling a multiplicity of roles, including their family responsibilities. Four case-studies were carried out on the constraints facing women informal sector operators in Bangladesh, the Philippines, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.[70] These studies document the broad discrimination suffered by women in the micro-business environment, as well as more specific forms of discrimination, and particularly the barriers they face in obtaining financing and technical and managerial training. A general recommendation that emerges from the studies is the need

One of the countries in which the ILO has been active in organizing **credit for informal sector enterprises** is *Honduras*, where advice was provided on the establishment of a credit line which has granted over 30,000 credits since 1992, of which some 60 per cent have gone to women. Most credits are accompanied by business development services.

for an integrated approach to the development of women micro-entrepreneurs, not only based on specific support services for women informal sector operators, but also designed to influence overall policies in their favour.

The experience of the ILO in promoting informal sector micro-enterprises is achieving recognition in many institutions worldwide. For example, the United Nations Task Force set up to develop a special programme of support for the informal sector in Africa has adopted the ILO's participatory approach to supporting informal sector self-help organizations. The guidelines adopted by the Task Force for country project formulation missions indicate how organizations representing informal sector operators should be involved in policy reform strategies and the development of support programmes. Activities are due to commence in 1998 in around ten African countries to design programmes which complement existing projects and to develop inter-institutional cooperation.

Training

Increasingly, enterprises and individuals are having to rely on knowledge, innovation and technical ability to improve their performance and adapt to the changing demands of globalized competition and more flexible labour markets. At the same time, high levels of unemployment and the erosion of employment security are making it necessary to invest more in skill development to improve the employability of workers throughout their working lives. Against this background, the priorities of policy-makers are:

- the acquisition by the workforce of skills which allow workers to engage in freely chosen and productive employment and adapt to changing labour market needs; and
- enhanced training opportunities for women and vulnerable groups to augment their skills, productivity and incomes.

Meeting these priorities requires greater efficiency, flexibility and relevance in public and private training systems, and the participation of employers' and workers' representatives, alongside governments, in the development of training policies and programmes. The objective of ILO action in this field is the design and implementation by governments and employers' and workers' organizations of training policies and systems which are responsive to changing labour market conditions and offer access for all workers to opportunities for lifelong learning.

With a view to strengthening national capacity in training policy analysis and development, policy advice was provided to Bahrain, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Côte d'Ivoire, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Lesotho, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen and Zimbabwe. National and regional workshops for tripartite policy-makers were held for Oman, the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the African region, Ethiopia, the Pacific island States, China and the Asian region.

The experience gained over recent years in analysing and evaluating the performance of training systems and formulating alternative training policies was set out in a modular

With assistance from the ILO, **vocational training policy measures** adopted in member States during the biennium included:

- a review of national training policy and the skills required for job entry in *Bahrain*, with a view to the introduction of a new vocational training system;
- the commencement of a process of tripartite consultation in *Benin* concerning the formulation of legislation setting out the national training policy and establishing a training fund;
- the development of legislation in *Egypt* for the establishment of a national training authority; and
- the adoption of a series of reforms in *Senegal*, including the establishment of a tripartite national vocational training council and a training fund.

training package to facilitate its dissemination through training courses to the policy-makers concerned.[71] The training programme outlines a step-by-step process of reflection on how training systems can be made more effective and efficient. An approach is set out for mapping demand- and supply-side aspects of training supply and examples are provided of the policies adopted by various countries to reform their training systems. The training modules were tested in regional workshops organized for officials from Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. The programme has been designed to be flexible so that it can be constantly improved and adapted to new needs and circumstances as they arise.

With the aim of strengthening collaboration between international organizations working in the field of training and harmonizing the advice that they provide, the ILO undertook a research project with the World Bank to document recent experience in a broad range of developing and transition countries in reforming their training systems. Based on case-studies covering 17 countries, as well as studies of the nature of the reform process in Australia and the lessons that low- and middle-income countries can draw from the German "dual system", a synthesis report was prepared.[72] The main messages of the review point to:

- the importance of targeting categories of persons who are most likely to benefit from training;
- the major role of governments in the provision of information on the availability and effectiveness of training programmes;
- the feasibility of encouraging the emergence of private training providers; and
- the importance of political will, rather than institutional capacity, as a key to successful reform.

The results of this work, when they have been reviewed, will be disseminated by the ILO and the World Bank in a joint publication and through a series of joint workshops for constituents.

The analysis and documentation of national experience, as a basis for the provision of guidance to constituents, also concentrated on training legislation, the application of international labour standards in training policy and systems, strategic training partnerships between the State and enterprises, and the evaluation of training. Based on a review of training legislation in nearly 60 countries, a comparative study was prepared on training and labour legislation.[73] National studies were carried out on ten countries and regional reports were prepared for Africa and Latin America on the problems encountered in the application of international labour standards in the context of national training policy reforms. A national tripartite workshop was held in the Philippines to discuss the findings of these studies, which will provide the basis for the preparation of a practical guide on the promotion and application of the Human Resources Development Convention (No. 142) and Recommendation (No. 150), 1975, requested in March 1997 by the Governing Body Working Party on Policy regarding the

Revision of Standards. Based on ten case-studies of strategic training partnerships between the State and enterprises, a policy paper was presented to the ILO Enterprise Forum and a regional seminar was held in Chile in May 1997 on strategic alliances for training.[74] Finally, an approach to the evaluation of training outcomes which reflects ILO values and concerns was developed for the use of policy-makers and training practitioners in member States.[75]

Assistance to enhance the management of vocational education and training systems was provided to a number of countries, including the Philippines and Thailand. Training seminars were also held on this subject for policy-makers from South-East Asian countries, Eastern European countries and Central Asia. Newly prepared modular learning materials for senior vocational training administrators were tested in these training activities.[76] The new materials are based on experience, current trends and best practices in 11 countries. They address separately the issues of vocational education, labour market training and enterprise training systems. They analyse different types of organization of training systems, the decentralization of training services, sources of funding and the allocation of resources.

The provision of lifelong learning opportunities for all workers requires increasingly flexible systems of training delivery, and particularly systems which are based on a modular approach. Advice on the introduction and adaptation of modular training was provided during the biennium in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine. Several projects were carried out to introduce modular training methodologies and curricula. The methodology was further refined on the basis of a review of innovative practices using the modular approach and the adaptation of training to the needs of employers and individuals in Australia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.[77] Building on the Modules of Employable Skills (MES), the Staff Development Package and a number of elements were revised or developed. Training materials were also produced on community-based training for employment and income generation.[78] Technical advisory services for the introduction or strengthening of community-based skills training for self-employment and income-generating activities were provided to Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Indonesia, Poland, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan. A project to develop community-based organizations for the promotion of employment in Pakistan led to the establishment of some 30 employment schemes in 136 villages and 24 urban sites over a three-year

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With ILO assistance, a number of member States have made significant progress in the introduction of **modular training methods and programmes**, including:

- *China*, where an expert meeting held in 1996 reviewed the development of modular training with ILO assistance since the late 1980s and found that the methodology has been so fully developed in the country that it has almost become the state methodology for training and is used by a wide range of state enterprises;
- *Poland*, where surveys were carried out of adult training and retraining needs, modular training programmes were developed for some 20 occupations, and nearly 300 persons were trained in modular curriculum development and implementation, including heads of training institutions. Twelve lead centres were set up with a view to the implementation of modular training programmes in over 100 training centres nationwide; and
- *the Russian Federation*, where an international centre for modular training was set up in Moscow to cover the Russian Federation and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), as well as 37 regional centres in the various countries, with regular seminars being organized to train coordinators and representatives of enterprises and training institutions.

Assistance projects to introduce the competency-based modular approach to training were also commenced in 1997 in *Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina* and *Ukraine*.

period. There were around 9,000 beneficiaries of the schemes, including 7,000 who were organized in community-based organizations. The beneficiaries received skills training, entrepreneurship training and small loans. From the employment that they found as a result of the schemes, household income rose by between 30 and 120 per cent, generating demand for other goods and services and thereby creating additional employment opportunities and improved standards of living.

Conflict-affected countries

The large number of countries affected by armed conflict and the resulting socio-economic and physical destruction pose a major challenge to the fight against poverty, the advance of democracy and the protection of workers. Skills training and employment promotion are critical components of the efforts required to reconstruct communities, reintegrate the large numbers of conflict-affected groups and promote sustainable peace. However, innovative training and employment promotion strategies are required to overcome the inherent problems of conflict-affected countries. An action programme was therefore undertaken on skills and entrepreneurship training for countries emerging from armed conflict with the objective of enhancing capacity in these countries to design and implement programmes and measures for the effective reintegration of all conflict-affected groups and the building of sustainable peace.

The situation of various conflict-affected groups and the action taken to improve their situation were analysed in a series of country studies covering Angola,[79] Bosnia and Herzegovina,[80] Cambodia,[81] El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala,[82] Lebanon,[83] Liberia, Mali, Mozambique,[84] Namibia, Niger, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa,[85] Uganda [86] and Zimbabwe. The studies focused on small enterprise promotion and micro-credit schemes,[87] vocational training, the situation and role of trade unions, conflict-affected women and other gender concerns,[88] child soldiers, conflict-affected youth, persons with disabilities [89] and increased drug abuse as economic activities become criminalized in conflict and post-conflict situations. A compendium was also prepared of relevant reintegration programmes and institutions.[90]

A consultative meeting for workers' representatives from 40 conflict-affected countries, which was held during the Conference in June 1997, revealed the full extent of the problems facing workers' organizations in the countries concerned.[91] A Tripartite Interregional Seminar on Reintegration of Conflict-affected Groups through Skills Training and Employment Promotion, bringing together tripartite representatives from 11 of the ILO's conflict-affected member States, took stock of the action programme's outputs and findings, and mapped out the urgent follow-up action required of the ILO

The key products of the action programme, which were examined by the participants at the **Interregional Seminar on Reintegration of Conflict-affected Groups through Skills Training and Employment Promotion**, are:

- *towards a framework for ILO policy and action in the conflict-affected context: Training and employment promotion for sustainable peace;*
- *guidelines for employment and skills training in conflict-affected countries;*
- training materials entitled *Dynamic training support of ILO constituents and other actors in promoting employment in conflict-affected countries;* and
- a follow-up to the action programme entitled *Employment for peace: A comprehensive international programme of technical assistance to conflict-affected countries.*

and its constituents.[92] The participants at the seminar emphasized that the ILO had originally been set up in 1919 in the aftermath of the First World War as part of the reconstruction process and that the Declaration of Philadelphia, adopted as the world emerged from the Second World War, asserted that lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice. They also pointed out that around one-third of ILO member States are currently experiencing, emerging from, entering or re-entering, or affected by conflict and that the ILO's usual responses and approaches require adaptation to the specific context of conflict-affected countries. They noted that the action programme had proven very effective in drawing attention to the magnitude of the problem constituted by the reconstruction of conflict-affected countries, the importance of employment and social issues in building sustainable peace and the important role that should be played by the ILO in assisting conflict-affected countries.

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3 Equality and social protection

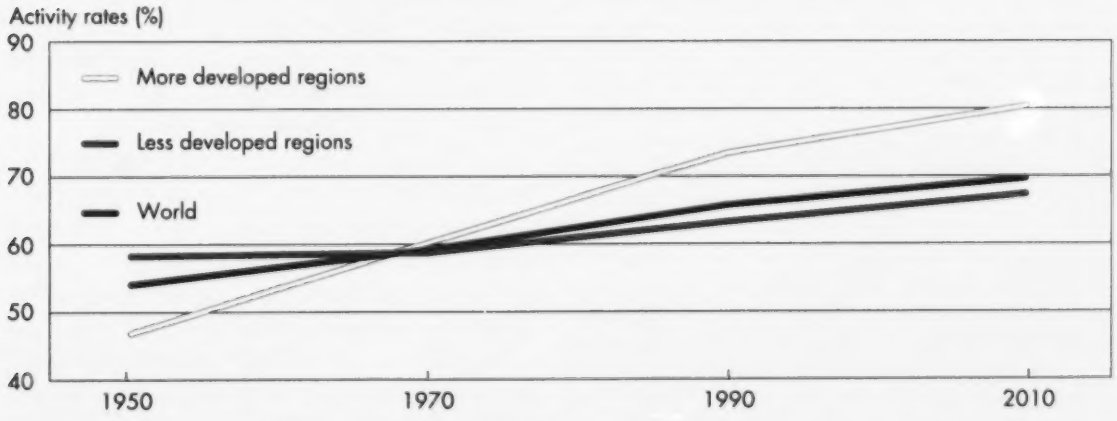
The protection of working people against work-related hazards and contingencies such as injury, illness and old age lies at the heart of the ILO's mandate. This chapter describes the activities undertaken during the biennium to improve the occupational safety and health situation in member States, including the ILO's contribution, particularly in the field of chemical safety, to the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The chapter also covers ILO action to improve working conditions and to strengthen and extend social security coverage.

Equality of opportunity and treatment is a fundamental right of all workers. It is integral to all democratic societies and is crucial to combating poverty. Equality of opportunity and treatment is of particular relevance to the situation of women workers, as well as to that of several specific categories of workers, including migrant workers, indigenous and tribal peoples, and persons with disabilities. This chapter groups together many of the activities carried out to promote equality for women workers, particularly as part of the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. It also describes the action taken to combat child labour through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC).

Equality for women in employment

Although the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women workers is widely accepted in most countries in the world, and there are indications that progress is being made in its implementation in practice, deep-rooted inequalities still

Figure 2. **Women's activity rates for the age group 20-54 years in 1950, 1970, 1990 and 2010 (world, more developed and less developed regions)**



Source: ILO Bureau of Statistics estimates based on *Economically active population, 1950-2010* (Geneva, 1996).

exist. Global women's economic activity rates have climbed from 54 per cent in 1950 to 67 per cent in 1996 and are expected to reach almost 70 per cent in 2010. The higher educational levels attained by women, coupled with falling fertility rates, particularly in the industrialized countries, have played an important role in contributing to these changes. Moreover, there is also a marked trend, once again particularly in industrialized countries, for women to spend more of their productive years in the labour force, with shorter periods away from work to give birth and care for children. ILO statistics also show that, in the majority of member States, wage differentials between men and women are gradually narrowing.

Yet, despite this steady but slow progress, inequalities persist on a global basis. Women still account for only around 40 per cent of the world's workforce. Depending on their country of residence, they earn between 50 and 80 per cent of average male wages. They are much more likely than men to work in part-time and temporary jobs. Moreover, so-called "women's jobs" are often assigned a lower value in terms of skill requirements and remuneration. Recent ILO research shows that around half of the world's workers are in sex-stereotyped occupations, in which one sex accounts for at least 80 per cent of the workforce. The research also found that there are over seven times as many male- as female-dominated non-agricultural occupations.[1]

Against this background, the objective of ILO action is greater equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women in the world of work. The overall strategy adopted by the ILO in this respect is to ensure that gender issues and equality concerns are integrated throughout its programme of activities and means of action.

A major focus of these activities during the biennium was the ILO's follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. A paper outlining ILO action to give effect to the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Beijing Conference was submitted to the Governing Body in March 1996.[2] An important initiative in the follow-up to the Beijing Conference was the launching of an International Programme on More and Better Jobs for Women. Two action

The **first action plans in the context of the International Programme on More and Better Jobs for Women** were completed in *Estonia*, *Pakistan* and the *United Republic of Tanzania*.

- *Estonia*, which ratified Convention No. 100 in 1996, has set up an interministerial committee to follow up the Beijing Conference, as well as a Bureau of Equal Opportunities. Targeted beneficiaries of the action plan are women living in three economically disadvantaged counties, who will be trained in entrepreneurship development and provided with support facilities to become self-employed and establish viable businesses. Training and information materials will be prepared and a gender-disaggregated labour market information system developed.
- In *Pakistan*, the action plan proposes the establishment of a high-level coordination committee at the federal level and counterpart committees at the provincial level, with the provision of training for officials and the social partners and the strengthening of data collection on women's employment. The women targeted by employment promotion activities are home-based workers in small and cottage industries, for whom assistance will include the promotion of representative organizations, improved marketing arrangements and other support services so that they can increase their income by progressing from subcontracting to selling their own products.
- The action plan in the *United Republic of Tanzania* proposes the creation of a high-level national coordination committee and a major review of national legislation with a view to making progress towards the ratification of Conventions Nos. 100 and 111, for example through the adoption of equal opportunities legislation. The plan proposes to improve employment opportunities for women in the formal sector through the development of gender-sensitive training. It will also develop income-earning activities for women in 20 villages and provide support services for women micro-entrepreneurs in two cities other than Dar es Salaam.

programmes were also undertaken on *Economic reform and structural change: Promoting women's employment and participation in social funds* and *Labour inspection and equality of rights for women*.

The basic principles of equality for women workers are set out in two of the ILO's seven fundamental Conventions: the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111). Conventions Nos. 100 and 111 are among the most highly ratified of all ILO Conventions, with 135 and 129 ratifications, respectively, by the end of the biennium. The technical support provided to member States to improve observance of these Conventions included assistance to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the application of Convention No. 111 and collaboration in a series of seminars in Brazil for the design and implementation of a new system to handle complaints regarding discrimination. Assistance was also provided to South Africa for the drafting of new employment equity legislation.

Developments in the employment patterns of women have been accompanied by profound changes in workplace practices and rising expectations regarding the rights of women during their child-bearing years. The issue of maternity protection has raised concerns, which are sometimes controversial, with regard to protection of employment, equality and non-discrimination, and the health protection of mothers and children. In response to these concerns, the Governing Body has placed the revision of the Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 95) on the agenda of the 87th Session of the Conference in 1999. The wide interest of member States in this subject is illustrated by the response to the ILO's request for information on national law and practice, which elicited replies from 104 member States.[3]

As a specific contribution to following up the Beijing Conference, an International Programme on More and Better Jobs for Women was developed and launched.[4] The programme is designed to act as a focus for the efforts of the ILO and its partners to reinforce the long-standing priority of promoting full, productive and remunerative employment in conditions of equality of opportunity and treatment. Starting in a small number of countries and areas, namely Burkina Faso, Estonia, Mexico, Pakistan, the United Republic of Tanzania and the West Bank and Gaza, assistance was provided for the development of action plans and the establishment of institutional structures and arrangements for their implementation. The action plans in all the above countries and areas will be completed early in 1998 and submitted to donors for financing. In each case, the action plans focus on: institutional capacity-building, including the strengthening of representative bodies, the legal framework and information on the labour market; employment promotion activities for targeted categories of women; and the compilation and dissemination of information. The goal is to demonstrate in practical ways that it is feasible to achieve both more and better jobs for women by providing an opportunity for the replication of successful ILO activities on a broader scale.

The ILO's follow-up to the Beijing Conference included technical cooperation activities focused on gender training and the dissemination of information on women workers' rights. The objective of one project was the sensitization of ILO staff and constituents to gender issues and the strengthening of their capacity to carry out gender analysis and planning in their work. Training courses were organized for ILO staff from headquarters and the field with a view to mainstreaming gender issues throughout the ILO's work. Gender training

Recent gender initiatives in the countries covered by the interregional project on the dissemination of information on women workers' rights have included:

- a survey carried out in 30 cities in *China* on redundant women, the findings of which were presented at a seminar where action plans and schemes were devised for redundant women workers, and which was followed by the organization of a national week on the re-employment of women workers, including lectures in several cities and seminars featuring women who have found new employment opportunities;
- the production and dissemination in *El Salvador* of training and information materials on women workers' rights, the use of these materials by a specially trained interministerial group and the holding of a conference on the experiences of women employers, attended by 300 women entrepreneurs, which received broad media coverage; and
- the preparation in *Hungary*, in close collaboration with the newly established Office for the Status of Women of the Ministry of Labour, of a background publication on women workers' rights and the holding of various seminars on specific issues related to women's employment in different regions of the country.

activities were then organized at the national level in around 30 countries. In many of the countries concerned, it was the first time that the tripartite constituents had met to discuss the issue of gender equality in employment and work. For the countries of the common market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) in Latin America, a subregional training course for officials and the social partners, which was attended by equal numbers of men and women participants, was followed by the setting up of national task forces on gender equality. Each task force organized a national gender training seminar and formulated a work plan. A network of persons trained in gender issues was set up and plans were developed for subregional activities in 1998.

An interregional project on the dissemination of information on women workers' rights was also carried out in China, Egypt, El Salvador, Hungary, India, Mali, Suriname, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. In each participating country, a tripartite national steering committee was set up, which acted as an important venue for social dialogue on work-related gender issues. Information materials were produced on the national legal framework respecting gender equality and the situation of women workers in the country concerned. Training was provided to middle-level officials and staff of governments, employers' and workers' organizations and women's NGOs on the organization of awareness-raising activities and the provision of gender training. As a result of these activities, a core group of trainers and resource persons on women workers' rights was formed towards the end of the biennium in each of the countries and provided with training materials adapted to the national situation. The training provided to these groups of trainers concentrated on building their capacity to organize training activities for their colleagues in government services, employers' and workers' organizations and NGOs. At the end of the biennium, several of these groups had started planning activities for 1998 in their own and other countries. For example, the trainers and resource persons in Hungary planned a workshop for counterparts in Ukraine to be held early in 1998.

A number of research activities were undertaken and studies published during the biennium to shed further light on work-related gender issues. These included a study on the economic and social basis of prostitution in South-East Asia.[5] An article was also published in the *International Labour Review* on sexual harassment, which documented recent trends in judicial decisions on this issue. Increased awareness of this problem has led to the adoption of legislation in several countries since the early 1990s, with some 36 States now having specific legislation on the subject.[6] A study was published on the experiences of women with disabili-

The conclusions adopted by the participants at the Tripartite Meeting on **Breaking through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management** recommended several strategies to promote women in management, including:

- regulatory mechanisms and legal frameworks to eliminate discrimination on grounds of sex;
- affirmative action and guidelines to genuinely change attitudes, while taking existing diversities into account;
- the adoption of appropriate steps by enterprises, institutions and governments to ensure that employees are aware of obligations and rights, including those stemming from equal employment laws;
- positive action and equal opportunities policies to level the playing field and ensure equal opportunities and treatment for women in recruitment and promotion;
- the development of ways, including more flexible working hours, reduced hours of work and adequate child- and elder-care facilities, to enable both women and men to combine the building of a career and the raising of a family;
- mentoring for women to provide advice and develop their professional skills;
- the appointment of corporate officers in the personnel departments of enterprises with responsibility for monitoring and promoting equal opportunities throughout the enterprise; and
- access of women to business skills training to help them run their own businesses.

The participants also emphasized the importance of employers' and workers' organizations appointing women to top positions in their own structures and the significant role of national tripartite commissions, where they exist, in promoting equal opportunities for women and men.

ties who have successfully coped with their difficulties in the labour market in developing countries.[7] The ILO provided technical inputs and sponsored the participation of a number of women with disabilities at the International Leadership Forum for Women with Disabilities, held in Washington, DC, in June 1997. At the Forum, over 600 disabled women leaders gave a warm welcome to ILO interventions on subjects ranging from gender training and small enterprise development to the employment of persons with disabilities and critical issues for women in the world of work.

In December 1997, the ILO held a Tripartite Meeting on Breaking through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management. The Meeting and the report submitted to it, which were both widely reviewed by the world's press, noted the progress made by women in closing the gap with men in managerial and professional jobs, but emphasized that they still rarely break through the "glass ceiling" separating them from top-level positions.[8] The Meeting called on the ILO to fully integrate, or mainstream, gender issues into its active partnership policy and to organize another tripartite meeting to produce a manual of best practices on the promotion of women in management.

Promoting women's participation in social funds

There is little awareness of the different ways in which economic reform and structural adjustment programmes affect men and women. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the gender dimension of the principal compensatory programmes included in structural adjustment packages, namely the social funds that have been established in over 30 countries in recent years. It was to address these shortcomings that activities were undertaken to promote awareness of the gender perspective in economic reform and structural adjustment programmes. An action programme was also carried out with the objective of promoting women's employment and their participation in social funds.

Priority was given in these activities to promoting national tripartite dialogue on the gender-differentiated impact of structural adjustment and economic reform programmes. Assistance was also provided with the formulation of national action programmes to promote the employment of women in the new socio-economic context. National tripartite workshops

Under the impetus of the action programme, greater attention was paid to **gender-related aspects of social funds** in:

- *Egypt*, where a unit was created in the Social Fund for Development to deal with the integration of a gender perspective into the social fund;
- *Latin America*, where REDSOCIAL, the network of labour and social affairs ministers, is planning a regional discussion on the integration of a gender perspective into social funds throughout Latin America, which may take the form of a joint workshop to develop the appropriate guidelines; and
- *Zambia*, where the management of the Social Recovery Project organized a series of staff brainstorming/training meetings to improve the integration of the gender dimension in the selection and approval of projects.

on the impact of structural adjustment policies on women workers were held in 1997 in the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, while national tripartite networks were set up in India and Sri Lanka. The tripartite networks and meetings served as national fora to discuss the gender-differentiated impact of structural adjustment programmes and to formulate recommendations for concrete action to promote gender equality in employment promotion measures. The tripartite networks in India and Sri Lanka commissioned studies on how economic reform packages have affected women's employment and conditions of work in various economic sectors. They encouraged further debate by organizing thematic workshops and, in the case of the Indian network, publishing a newsletter. The networks also established databases with the respective national statistical offices to monitor the longer-term impact of economic reforms on women workers.

The action programme on *Economic reform and structural change: Promoting women's employment and participation in social funds* was designed to respond to two important issues raised by the Beijing Conference: combating the feminization of poverty; and integrating a gender perspective into the debate and action on macro-economic reforms. Data were collected and research carried out in Bolivia, Egypt, Honduras, Madagascar, Mexico, Peru and Zambia.[9] The case-studies conducted in the above countries acted as a means of initiating national dialogue and raising awareness of the need to improve the performance of existing social funds in terms of their gender dimension. The cooperation of the institutions responsible for the social funds and the discussion of the findings of this work with the key actors paved the way for the adoption of concrete action. The findings of the action programme were reviewed at a Technical Brainstorming Workshop, held in September-October 1997, and will be published in 1998.

The implementation of the action programme coincided with a number of regional and international meetings organized to review ten years of operation of the new generation of social funds. These events provided a context for closer collaboration between the World Bank and the ILO, in the process of carrying out the case-studies and the Technical Brainstorming Workshop referred to above, as well as in the International Workshop on Social Funds organized by the World Bank in May 1997. In the Workshop, the ILO drew attention to two neglected dimensions of social funds, namely: investments in targeted and decentralized employment generation schemes; and the limited outreach of social funds to women and the absence of a gender-sensitive policy framework. The latter was adopted by the Workshop as one of the four priority areas for action in relation to social funds. The ILO and the World Bank agreed to collaborate on the development of joint guidelines for the design of social funds and to undertake joint evaluations of their performance. The ILO has also received requests for advice, for example from Uzbekistan, on the integration of a gender perspective in social funds at the design stage.

Labour administration and equality of rights for women

The development, implementation and supervision of policies and measures to protect workers, including women workers and their basic rights, from part of the core mission of labour administrations. An action programme was implemented with the goal of making available to national labour administrations a set of recommendations on policy instruments and practical measures to ensure equality of rights for women at the workplace. Studies were undertaken to analyse the situation as regards equality for women workers in Chile, China, France, Ghana and Romania. The studies examined the differences and similarities between the labour administration structures in the various countries and the role in promoting equality played by key actors, including policy-makers and administrations, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs and other actors in civil society. They noted the far-reaching effects of the world conferences organized by the United Nations on women's issues, including the Beijing Conference, in encouraging the establishment of structures and plans to promote equality at the national level. They also assessed the results of specific measures that have been adopted to promote equal opportunities between men and women workers.

The findings were used to prepare a draft methodological guide for labour administrations, which was reviewed by a meeting of specialists held in December 1997. The guide emphasizes the important role of labour administrations in collecting and analysing data on women's employment and in the implementation of equality laws. It also points to the need for coordination within and outside labour administrations, and between the various ministries concerned, for the design and implementation of action to promote equality of opportunity and treatment. In some countries, labour administrations are called upon to play a leading role in promoting equality, as in the case of Chile, where a specialized tripartite commission has formulated an equal opportunities plan in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour. In other cases, the lead is taken by structures outside the labour administration, such as the National Council for Women and Development of Ghana. A consolidated document based on the case-studies and the conclusions reached by the experts will be published early in 1998.[10]

Elimination of child labour

The elimination of child labour, particularly in its most extreme and exploitative forms, is one of the ILO's priority areas of action and has rapidly become the focus of international attention over recent years. A series of international conferences were successful in further raising awareness of the problem during the biennium. The ILO provided technical support to the Amsterdam Child Labour Conference in February 1997, the preparatory regional consultations in Brasilia, Lahore and Pretoria, and the International Conference on Child Labour held in Oslo in October 1997.

Activities to address the issues involved in child labour continued to be concentrated around the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), which has expanded

ILO-IPEC adopts a phased and multisectoral strategy in each participating country, consisting of the following steps:

- *motivating* a broad alliance of partners to acknowledge the problem of child labour and act against it;
- carrying out a *situational analysis;*
- assisting with the development and implementation of *national policies;*

- *strengthening* existing organizations and setting up *institutional mechanisms;*
- *creating awareness* nationwide, in communities and workplaces;
- promoting the *development and application of protective legislation;*
- supporting *direct action;*
- *replicating and expanding* successful projects; and
- *mainstreaming* child labour issues into socio-economic policies, programmes and budgets.

rapidly since it was first launched in 1992. An action programme was also carried out to synthesize the lessons learned in combating child labour with a view to facilitating their replication by constituents. Financed by donors from 18 countries, ILO-IPEC is operational in some 40 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Arab States. Of these, 29 countries have underlined their commitment to combating child labour by signing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with ILO-IPEC. Over 1,000 action and mini-programmes have been launched at the national level over the past five years. A synthesis report of the work of ILO-IPEC was produced towards the end of the biennium.[11]

The objective of ILO-IPEC is to work towards the progressive elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities to address the problem and by contributing to a worldwide movement to combat child labour. Priority target groups are children in bonded labour, children in hazardous working conditions and occupations, and children who are particularly vulnerable, including working children below the age of 12 and working girls. The starting-point for ILO-IPEC action is the political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labour, in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, other NGOs and other partners, such as universities and the media. The concept of sustainability is built into this action from the outset through emphasis on in-country "ownership".

The following are **examples in ILO-IPEC participating countries of significant progress** made in mobilizing a broad social alliance and developing national policies and programmes of action:

- important steps in the development of a broad social alliance in *Brazil* included: the creation of the National Forum for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour, coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and bringing together 36 institutions representing the federal Government, the social partners and NGOs; and the signing of an undertaking to combat child labour by the President of the Republic, state Governors, the social partners and NGOs;
- the significant progress made in terms of policy development in *Thailand* included: the adoption of a Bill on Prostitution Prevention and Suppression; the development of a draft National Plan of Action on Child Labour; and the announcement of the extension of basic education, the provision of non-formal education for all children and the launching of national education campaigns on child labour.

At the international level, ILO-IPEC has helped to put child labour high on the world developmental agenda, while at the national level the political commitment and broad social alliance mobilized in most participating countries have resulted in greater interest and action. Many countries have defined their national priorities with regard to child labour and are implementing national programmes of action. Some countries have started investing significant financial and human resources to address the root causes of child labour and implement direct action and advocacy programmes. In these cases, the resources invested are far greater than those available to ILO-IPEC. New participating countries are moving from awareness-raising and sensitization into comprehensive programmes to change the lives of working children.

The action programmes supported by ILO-IPEC in participating countries are increasingly

focusing on the most intolerable forms of child labour. Some two-thirds of these programmes are directed towards children engaged in hazardous work and working conditions, with 20 per cent aimed at combating forced labour. By economic sector, the action programmes divide fairly equally between the services sector, manufacturing and agriculture. In terms of types of intervention, there has been a significant shift from action directly targeting children in the early 1990s, towards a broader alliance between direct action (32 per cent of action programmes), awareness-raising (30 per cent), institutional and policy development (21 per cent) and programme development, research and evaluation (17 per cent). The action programmes carried out in collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations are described in Chapter 4, while information is provided in Chapter 5 on some of the action programmes carried out in each region.

Action at the national level was reinforced by activities at the regional and subregional levels. These included a programme of action on child labour in commercial agriculture in English-speaking African countries[12] and a study on child labour in manufacturing in South-East Asia.[13] Another programme was launched in eight Asian countries to combat the trafficking of children and their exploitation in prostitution and other intolerable forms of child labour. During the first phase of the programme, action-oriented research was carried out to improve understanding of the problem, identify responses, develop a strategy for action and design programmes, which will be carried out during the second phase of the programme, for the prevention of trafficking in children and the rehabilitation of the child victims of this practice. Technical assistance was also provided for the development of policies and programmes by regional bodies, including:

- the Arusha recommendations on child labour, adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in April 1997;
- the Cartagena de Indias Declaration adopted by the first Latin American meeting on Child Labour, attended by ministers and social partners from 20 Latin American countries in May 1997;
- the child labour resolution adopted by the Council of Europe in June 1997; and
- the Declaration adopted by the Joint Parliamentary Committee of MERCOSUR in September 1997.

The proposed objectives of **new standards on extreme forms of child labour**, which will be discussed by the Conference for the first time in 1998, are the immediate elimination of the following intolerable practices worldwide:

- activities that are contrary to fundamental human rights: bonded child labour, children working under conditions of slave-like practices; children in prostitution; the use of children in drug trafficking and/or the production of pornography;
- activities that expose children to particularly grave hazards to their safety and health, such as work with chemicals, dangerous tools and machines, or work involving heavy loads and complex tasks;
- activities that are performed under hazardous working conditions and environments; and
- the total prohibition of work by very young children and the provision of special protection for girls.

International standards and guidance on child labour

The Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) and Recommendation (No. 146), 1973, provide the essential guidelines for policy at the national and international levels. ILO-IPEC has served as an operational arm of the ILO to assist in the formulation of national policies which are in line with these standards. ILO-IPEC promotes the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and takes into account in the formulation

of its activities the Programme of action for the elimination of the exploitation of child labour adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

In response to calls from member States, the ILO has taken the lead in issuing a global call for priority action on intolerable forms of child labour with the publication of its report *Child labour: Targeting the intolerable*.[14] The Conference agenda for 1998 includes the first discussion of new international labour standards on this subject, in the form of a proposed Convention and Recommendation, with a view to their adoption in 1999. The new standards are intended to complement and reinforce existing ILO Conventions. The most important of these are Convention No. 138, which sets the minimum age for admission to employment in all economic sectors, and the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), which is applicable to certain brutal forms of child labour, such as debt bondage, prostitution, slavery and slavery-like practices.

Various types of guidance materials were developed during the biennium to facilitate the integration into national policies and programmes of the lessons learned from ILO action on child labour in recent years. The ILO-IPEC interregional project on the mobilization of teachers, educators and their organizations resulted in the preparation of a resource kit and a synthesis report on child labour and education.[15] An action programme entitled *Manual on action planning for the progressive elimination of child labour* was also carried out to draw together the useful information and guidance acquired through ILO experience in this field.[16] The manual is intended to strengthen the capacities of governments, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs and other partners to design a phased comprehensive national child labour programme. The activities carried out to assist in the compilation of reliable data on child labour are described in Chapter 2.

Since the programme was launched in 1992, a number of independent evaluations of ILO-IPEC activities have been carried out. However, beginning in 1997, a more systematic approach was adopted with the implementation of seven country reviews to assess the progress made by countries in combating child labour. The reviews, covering Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya, Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand and Turkey, were carried out by independent national research and evaluation teams and were being finalized at the end of the biennium. The evaluations have generally been positive and have confirmed that the ILO-IPEC strategy provides a credible and workable approach to the problem of child labour. However, they have also attested to the difficulty of assessing the *quantitative* impact of the programme. Although there is a temptation to use the number of children withdrawn from work situations as an indicator of its achievements, this may not necessarily be the appropriate approach. Prevention has turned out to be the most cost-effective response to the problem. Success can therefore be measured less in terms of numbers of children withdrawn from work than in the development of the capacity of national mechanisms and processes to deal effectively with the problem of child labour in a sustainable manner. At the level of the community and society, these qualitative impacts include:

- greater awareness and understanding of child labour problems, the rights of children and the value of education for children;
- the establishment and functioning of village/community committees and vigilance groups working on child labour issues and the prevention of the exploitation of child labour in the community; and

- the adoption of policies and the replication of models of child labour interventions in schools, provincial plans and strategies on women's and child labour issues, and the expansion of primary education.

For the children themselves, the benefits consist of their removal from hazardous working conditions, a reduction in working hours, the provision of more and better education, better job prospects, more personal discipline, more rest and recreation, better communication skills and concentration, better health, more self-confidence and aspirations for the future.

Migrant workers

The globalization of the world's economies is increasing the complexities and problems involved in the management of growing movements of labour across national borders. The effectiveness of national policies on migrant workers has been progressively eroded by unauthorized migration, rising xenophobia in the North, anxieties about emigration pressures in less developed regions and the growing commercialization of migration processes. Arrangements for the management of migration which have proven effective in the past, such as the conclusion of bilateral agreements, no longer cover much of the current migration. Indeed, a large share of contemporary migration is organized by profit-oriented commercial agents and takes place under clandestine conditions in order to evade the growing restrictions on the legal entry and employment of foreign workers.

The objective of ILO action relating to migration is the design and implementation by constituents of policies and measures which provide effective protection to migrant workers, combat discrimination and improve the management of migrant flows, particularly in terms of reducing irregularities and integrating established migrants into their host societies. The activities carried out in pursuance of this objective included policy analysis and advice, training and

The **Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Future ILO Activities in the Field of Migration**, held in April 1997, recommended that:

- in the case of *migrants engaged in time-bound activities* (seasonal workers, project-tied workers, special-purpose workers, cross-border service providers, students and trainees), their *tied employment* should be strictly limited in time, the workers concerned should not suffer a lack of social security protection on account of the temporary nature of their employment, employers should be responsible for arranging adequate housing and *trainees* should benefit from the same wages and conditions of employment as national workers when they carry out an ordinary activity;
- to protect *migrant workers recruited by private agents*, sending and receiving countries should consider the conclusion of bilateral labour agreements, employment services should play a greater role in their recruitment and placement, and adequate sanctions should be imposed for recruitment abuses and malpractices;
- appropriate legislation and implementation machinery should be adopted for the granting of recruitment licenses;
- States should cooperate more closely for the control of illegal recruitment and trafficking of migrant workers; and
- as a new ILO means of action, there should be a procedure for carrying out studies in the territory of a State under the jurisdiction of which widespread and persistent exploitative practices are alleged to be occurring; the governments concerned would be informed of the findings with a view to developing remedies and solutions.

The guidelines of the Meeting of Experts were approved by the Governing Body in November 1997 and the ILO is preparing to launch the new procedure referred to above.

research into migration issues. In particular, a tripartite meeting of experts was held in April 1997 (see box) to provide guidance on future national and international action in the field of migration, especially in relation to two increasingly important issues which are not adequately covered by existing ILO standards, namely the protection of workers engaged under temporary migration schemes; and the protection of workers recruited by private agents for employment in another country. The meeting considered a report prepared by the ILO on the situation of these vulnerable categories of migrants.[17]

Various types of assistance were provided to constituents during the biennium to strengthen their capacity to deal with migration issues, analyse the situation, formulate appropriate policies, develop the relevant legislation and procedures, and set up programmes benefiting migrant workers. Training seminars were organized for senior officials in Belarus, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan on best practice in the management of emigration and immigration, the functions of foreign employment administrations and the role played by private agents in recruitment and placement.

ILO assistance contributed to the formulation and adoption of **measures and programmes relating to migrant workers** in several countries, including:

- the formulation in *Azerbaijan* of draft legislation on labour emigration and immigration, which has been submitted to Parliament and contains provisions regulating private recruitment agencies and setting up a system for the granting of work permits;
- the design in *Georgia* of an administrative structure for a foreign employment system;
- the adoption by the *Republic of Korea* of a foreign workers policy to supplement the present trainee policy, allowing trainees to apply for work permits;
- the expansion by the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation of social security benefits for migrant workers to include the provision of pension benefits to contributors;
- the launching of a project in the *Philippines* to develop employment schemes for Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong, China, upon their return, with a pilot group of over 100 workers receiving training in simple business skills and guidance in identifying viable small businesses in which they can invest their remittances to create employment for their families; and
- the creation of a programme by an NGO in *Singapore* to help female migrant domestic helpers acquire other employable skills, including those that can be used in the hotel and catering industry and basic business skills.

The ILO also helped the Ministry of Labour of Kenya organize a national workshop on private recruitment. Analytical work included a study of rising pressures for emigration over the past decade and future prospects in the Maghreb region.[18] Case studies were carried out to assess the factors contributing to emigration pressures in four large Asian countries, namely China, Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam.[19] Assistance was also provided to national administrations, workers' organizations and NGOs for the development of services to assist women migrant workers in vulnerable occupations. With the collaboration of the ILO, the All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions is developing means through which trade unions can play a bigger role in protecting migrant workers against recruitment abuses.

Policy development in the field of migrant workers continued to be supported by the publication of the results of research and analytical activities. A book was published on the role that can be played by the governments of labour-sending countries in protecting emigrant workers and dealing with the effects of labour migration on the domestic economy.[20] A paper was also published on the temporary migration of service providers, including managers, professionals, technical workers and employees of international contractors, for example in the construction industry.[21] However, the main focus of research activities was on combating

Central and Eastern European countries have experienced great difficulties in dealing with the steady increase in the numbers of unauthorized migrant workers since the lifting of the restrictions on freedom of movement which existed in many cases up to 1989. To help the countries concerned take stock of the situation and identify the available policy options, the ILO initiated the "Informal Network on Foreign Labour in Central and Eastern Europe" in 1995. The Informal Network met annually during the biennium, with the meetings in Budapest in 1996 and Bratislava in 1997 being attended by representatives of 11 and 13 countries respectively. National workshops were also organized in a number of countries to help analyse the situation in the country concerned.

The Informal Network has led to better cooperation between the countries in the region on migration issues, an improved understanding by the responsible officials of what is, in many cases, a relatively new problem for them, and the development of greater capacity for the design and implementation of the appropriate policies and measures.

discrimination in labour-receiving countries. Studies were completed on eight western European countries, Canada and the United States.[22] These show that discrimination in the world of work against migrant workers and second-generation immigrants is widespread and persistent, and that much of the legislation aimed at preventing such discrimination is of only limited value. The findings are being disseminated through national seminars with a view to formulating recommendations on where and how improvements can be made. These will be set out in a draft manual on achieving equality for migrant workers, which will be reviewed by an interregional seminar in 1998.

The ILO's work in this field has brought it recognition as one of the lead agencies in combating discrimination against migrant and ethnic minority workers. The ILO participated in many international meetings on the subject, as well as working closely with the Council of Europe, the European Union, the European social partners and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Moreover, in the follow up to the International Conference on Population and Development, the ILO has been appointed coordinator of a technical symposium on international migration, to be held in 1998.

Indigenous and tribal peoples

The Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and the earlier Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957 (No. 107), are the only two international Conventions covering this disadvantaged and vulnerable category of workers. Following ratifications by Denmark and Guatemala in 1996, Convention No. 169 has now been ratified by ten member States, while Convention No. 107 (which was revised by Convention No. 169) remains in force for a further 21 countries.

Substantial progress was made during the biennium in the **legal and policy framework respecting indigenous and tribal peoples** in:

- *Guatemala*, where the final peace agreement, signed in 1996, contains a component on the identity and rights of indigenous peoples, under which a number of joint commissions, composed of representatives of the Government and indigenous organizations, have been set up to implement the agreement; and

The objective of ILO action in this area is the adoption by member States of policies and programmes to reduce poverty among indigenous and tribal peoples, increase their access to employment opportunities, improve their terms of employment and strengthen their bargaining and organizational capabilities. Information was disseminated to increase awareness of the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples and policy advice was provided to national authorities on indigenous matters. Capacity-building activities were carried out to strengthen

- the *Philippines*, where legislation, formulated through an extensive process of consultation with the representatives of the concerned parties, was adopted on the recognition, protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples.

organizations of indigenous and tribal peoples and networking was encouraged with other social actors. The activities undertaken to promote employment for indigenous and tribal peoples through the development of cooperatives and self-help organizations are described in Chapter 2.

Action to strengthen organizations of indigenous and tribal peoples focused on a small number of countries, including Bolivia, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru and the Philippines. In Guatemala, following the signature of the final peace agreement, which contains components on indigenous peoples, a nationwide training programme was undertaken for grass-roots indigenous organizations on the content and implications of the agreement and Convention No. 169. Training was also provided for the staff of the Ombudsman's Office of Guatemala. In Bolivia, in-service training was organized for indigenous legal officers on the current legislation respecting land, territories and resource use. At the request of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Highland Peoples Development in the North-East of Cambodia, the ILO commenced capacity-building activities for indigenous organizations and government officials and provided policy advice for the integration of the principles set out in Convention No. 169 into the national draft policy on indigenous peoples. Research was also carried out on the socio-economic profile and legal protection of 63 indigenous groups inhabiting the Peruvian Amazon and was presented to a national meeting of representatives of indigenous organizations and public officials held in March 1997.[23] The conclusions of the meeting will be used to formulate recommendations for a large-scale programme on local sustainable development which will take into account the needs of the critically poor and of communities displaced by political violence.

In the Philippines, group discussions were organized to bring together government agencies and state-controlled energy and mining companies. The discussions resulted in firm commitments to amend the companies' procedures with regard to community-based consultations and compensation and rehabilitation schemes. Technical guidance was also provided upon request to a number of private and parastatal oil and mining companies which requested information on measures to minimize the adverse social impact of their operations on indigenous communities and the design of adequate compensation and rehabilitation plans. In support of this work, the experiences of North American indigenous communities in negotiating at various levels with the public administration and private companies were documented in fields such as fishing, energy, wildlife conservation and logging.[24] A guide was also prepared on the scope and implications of Convention No. 169.[25] In Costa Rica, a radio programme on Convention No. 169 was developed in collaboration with indigenous organizations and was broadcast in indigenous languages. Similar activities are being planned in other countries.

Many of the ILO's activities in support of indigenous and tribal peoples are carried out in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies. In addition to its participation in the United Nations task force covering the peace process in Guatemala, the ILO worked in close cooperation with UNDP's national indigenous programme in Bolivia and its highland peoples programme in Cambodia. Regular inter-agency meetings are held to coordinate action by United Nations agencies and donors for indigenous and tribal peoples. The meetings are organized annually by the ILO and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

Persons with disabilities

An estimated 600 million people, or 10 per cent of the world's population, are affected by physical or mental disabilities. A disproportionately high number of persons with disabilities who have the capacity to work are either unemployed or constrained to accept precarious or substandard employment conditions. In many cases, these workers are unable to compete effectively with other workers because they lack the opportunities to develop their skills and competence. It is against this background that many member States are reviewing the policies and measures that they have adopted with a view to achieving a better balance between protection of persons with disabilities and respect for the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment.

The objective of ILO activities in this area is greater respect for the rights of persons with disabilities and the development of a supportive environment for their increased social and economic integration. The assistance provided to constituents to promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in training and employment included technical support for the design and implementation of policies, supplemented by research and the exchange of information. A total of 18 countries requested advice from the Office on draft policy and related documents during the biennium. The measures taken by member States, often with ILO assistance, to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and promote their access to training and employment opportunities included the development or revision of national labour legislation in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova and Togo, as well as the formulation of employment equity legislation in Namibia and South Africa. National disability policies were formulated in Barbados, Costa Rica, Ghana, Namibia and South Africa, while the establishment or revision of national quota/levy systems was considered in China and Poland.

In March 1997, a White Paper was published in *Namibia* setting out a **national policy on disability** with the objective of achieving full social integration of disabled people in society. The principal features of the policy include:

- an undertaking to adopt legislation establishing a National Council on Disability;
- the provision of vocational training, guidance and rehabilitation that is open to all disabled people irrespective of their disability;
- the fullest possible vocational integration of people with disabilities, whenever possible in an ordinary working environment;
- the provision of sheltered employment, covered by a normal employer/employee relationship and remuneration, for persons who, because of their disability or special needs, are unable to obtain, keep or cope with the demands of a job in a competitive labour market;
- recognition of the right to organize of persons with disabilities and a commitment by the Government to encourage and support the formation and strengthening of their organizations; and
- the scrutiny of all plans and policies to ensure that they include the needs of disabled people.

Guidance for constituents on the legislative measures that have been adopted concerning persons with disabilities was provided in the form of a publication examining how disability issues are addressed in national labour legislation.[26] The principal guidance in this field is contained in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention (No. 159) and Recommendation (No. 168), 1983. By the end of the biennium, Convention No. 159 had been ratified by 59 member States. The situation as regards the implementation of these standards was examined in a General Survey of the reports supplied under article 19 of the ILO Constitution prepared by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and

Recommendations at the end of 1997.[27] The Committee of Experts noted a general trend in national practice for the use of vocational guidance, training, placement and employment services for the vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, as advocated in Convention No. 159. It also observed that in a growing number of countries, particularly where persons with disabilities have formed their own organizations to gain recognition and influence the relevant decisions, there has been significant progress in their social and occupational integration and reintegration. It pointed out that implementing the provisions of the Convention does not necessarily require vast resources, but above all the determination to attain the appropriate objectives and gradually extend the systems set up for that purpose. Finally, it expressed the hope that the Convention would receive a large number of ratifications in the near future.

Technical assistance was also provided in many member States to strengthen the capacity of governments and the social partners to provide training and employment opportunities for disabled youth and adults, and particularly women with disabilities. Policy and training support was provided for the integration of trainees with disabilities into ordinary vocational training institutions in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay, as well as in six Caribbean countries. Support was afforded to government projects to establish community-based rehabilitation programmes in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and in Gaza and the West Bank. Demonstration and training projects continued to be implemented in Mongolia, Namibia and Pakistan, as well as in the countries of Central America, in support of national community-based efforts to increase the access of persons with disabilities to training and job opportunities, especially in rural areas. Assistance was also provided for programmes in Chile to enhance their economic integration.

Two measures that have been adopted in many countries, and are under consideration in others, to promote the employment of persons with disabilities are national rehabilitation funds and related quota/levy systems. Synopses of these measures were drafted and an international guide was prepared.[28] This activity culminated in the holding of an International Conference on Policies and Management of National Rehabilitation Funds in Warsaw in February-March 1997. At the conference, representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities and national rehabilitation funds in countries operating funds and quota systems (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Netherlands and Poland) shared information with representatives of countries considering their introduction (Belarus, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Russian Federation and Ukraine). The participants discussed the impact and complexities of various combinations of incentives, legal requirements and levy systems and their applicability with regard to different economic sectors and types of disability.

In response to requests for assistance and guidance from constituents, research was conducted to identify policies, strategies and measures which encourage workers with disabilities to retain their jobs and return to work. A study was initiated on the situation in Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, examining employment and labour market policies, benefit and compensation programmes, employment support and rehabilitation services, services for the adaptation of work and workplaces, and enterprise strategies for handling disability. Further information is being collected by national informants and is being compiled in an issues paper, which will be discussed at an international meeting to be hosted by the Government of the United States in May

1998. The issues paper will identify policy measures which motivate persons with disabilities to return to work and will examine the cost-effectiveness of the various measures. It will also analyse practical obstacles, such as cases in which the persons concerned may lose the benefit of medical insurance if they return to work, or the failure to provide rehabilitation services at the appropriate time.

Although ILO standards call for the promotion of open and competitive employment for persons with disabilities, the number of facilities providing sheltered employment is increasing worldwide. A study was undertaken to examine labour relations and working conditions in sheltered employment in over 20 developing and industrialized countries.[29] Although the study found that many sheltered employment initiatives were effective in providing employment opportunities for workers with disabilities, in certain cases it also noted a failure to respect fundamental workers' rights, such as minimum wages, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Sheltered employment seldom offers many career opportunities and, even in the most successful cases, only around 5 per cent of workers are able to make the transition from sheltered to ordinary employment.

To encourage research and the exchange of information on employment and training issues for persons with disabilities, the Office continued to support the Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training (GLADNET), which it had initiated in 1995. Consisting of 100 social policy research institutes, universities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, the network became an independent entity in June 1997 with the creation of the GLADNET Association. Together with 12 partner organizations, the Office helps maintain the network's database and Web site (http://www.gladnet.org). The database contains current legislation, research reports, journal articles and unpublished information and is recognized as a leading on-line source of information, consulted regularly by researchers, policy-makers and ILO staff.

Combating drug and alcohol abuse

It is estimated that over 50 million people throughout the world are disabled by drug and alcohol abuse, which has become a cause of major concern in most countries. In particular, employers are rapidly becoming more aware of the high cost of drug and alcohol abuse in terms of absenteeism, illness and work-related casualties. It is estimated, for example, that on-the-job casualties linked to drugs and alcohol account for between 15 and 30 per cent of all work-related accidents. There is therefore growing interest worldwide in the implementation of prevention programmes, particularly at the workplace. Evaluations have shown such programmes to be very effective in reducing occupational accidents, sickness and accident benefit payments, absenteeism, grievances and disciplinary action at the workplace, often by 50 per cent or more.

As part of a broader international strategy to reduce demand for drugs and alcohol, the objectives of ILO action in this field consist of a dual strategy of prevention at the workplace and rehabilitation in the community. The activities carried out to achieve this objective continued to include policy formulation seminars, staff training courses, enterprise programmes and research covering over 40 countries.

The policy and conceptual framework for the ILO's work in this area is set out in the ILO Code of practice on the management of alcohol- and drug-related issues in the workplace,

Under one technical cooperation project, some 40 enterprises, representing a workforce of 125,000, have been adapting the **ILO's model programme for drug and alcohol prevention** for their own use. The participating enterprises have made a striking shift towards primary prevention. The enterprises include:

- in *Egypt*, the Petroleum Cooperative Company, the Cairo Transport Company and the Arab Gelatine Pharmaceutical Products Company;
- in *Mexico*, the Ford Motor Company, KALTEX (textiles) and CELANESE (chemicals);
- in *Namibia*, Telecom Namibia, Model Supermarket Ltd. and Namibia Beverages (Coca Cola);
- in *Poland*, Rokita Chemicals, Power Engineering Technical Services and the Rolling Stock Company; and
- in *Sri Lanka*, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Bata Shoes Co. Ltd. and Eveready Battery Ltd.

In each country, assistance was provided to set up tripartite advisory boards and national teams for project implementation. Training was organized for management and union representatives. These activities were supported by the adaptation of posters, brochures, videos and training manuals, and the establishment of a resource base for programme development.

A **drug and alcohol prevention project** was finalized during the biennium in the *Philippines*, which is one of the world's major suppliers of seafarers. The ILO helped the National Maritime Polytechnic to integrate drug and alcohol prevention programmes into the training curricula of the country's maritime academies, in which all qualified Filipino seafarers are trained. The support provided included assistance in the adaptation of the relevant modules and the development of a handbook for trainers.

which was published in 1996.[30] Promotional activities to raise awareness of the code included three regional and subregional meetings in Chile, Senegal and Zimbabwe, where the implementation of the code was discussed in detail. It was also the focus of the policy working group of the Third International Private Sector Conference on Drugs in the Workplace and the Community, which was organized by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in collaboration with the ILO in October 1997 in Malaysia. The participants at the Conference called for coordinated action at the national and international levels. They emphasized that all enterprises should have safety and health policies, which should include drug and alcohol prevention and assistance programmes, in which drug and alcohol abuse is treated as a health problem, without discrimination.

With ILO assistance, over 100 enterprises have been developing prevention and assistance programmes for their workforce throughout the biennium. The findings of the project carried out in Egypt, Mexico, Namibia, Poland and Sri Lanka were disseminated through a series of subregional seminars held in 1996 and 1997 to promote replication. Another project is continuing to promote similar programmes in a total of 36 companies in Hungary, Latvia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia and Ukraine. An interregional project, covering Egypt, India, Malaysia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, was also launched in 1996 to mobilize and develop prevention programmes for small enterprises. The experience gained from the adaptation of the ILO's model programme for drug and alcohol prevention will be compiled in the form of a compendium of workplace prevention programmes, which will be published in 1998 to provide further guidance to constituents.

A programme of training activities for addiction rehabilitation was also carried out in the Asia and Pacific region. More than 200 social workers, counsellors and rehabilitation officers received training during the first phase of the programme, which was completed in 1997. Plans have now been drawn up for a second phase, focusing on a range of specialized courses on subjects such as income-generating activities for recovering addicts and pre-

vention at the workplace. A large-scale project is also being carried out in India under which 18 NGOs in ten cities are being assisted in the development of rehabilitation programmes and support is being provided to 12 enterprises in six cities for the establishment of prevention programmes.

In a sector-specific activity, a global programme, undertaken at the request of the ILO's Joint Maritime Commission, continued to promote prevention initiatives in the maritime industry. A manual on drug and alcohol prevention programmes in the maritime industry was prepared in cooperation with two international shipping enterprises.[31] Intended for shipowners and managers, it focuses on the establishment and implementation of a prevention programme, with emphasis on engaging masters and officers in preventing drug and alcohol problems. The manual evidently responded to a perceived need, since around 800 shipping companies worldwide requested copies over a period of a few months.

The ILO's recognized expertise in this field meant that it played a higher-profile role at the international level. In addition to collaborating closely with UNDCP and other international organizations, the ILO acted as task force manager for the preparation of the United Nations Plan of Action on Drug Abuse Prevention in the Workplace, which forms part of the System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (SWAP). During the biennium, the Office also participated in the drafting of the United Nations Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction. The Declaration will be submitted for endorsement to a special session of the General Assembly in June 1998 devoted to the fight against the illicit production, sale, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities.

Occupational safety and health

At the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in subsequent major conferences, member States have repeatedly emphasized the link between health, environment and quality employment. Yet the major trends of recent years, including globalization, the rapid development of technology and the freer movement of goods and persons, bring with them a greater responsibility to harness their potential benefits and prevent any adverse effects. This applies in particular to issues of occupational and environmental safety and health. The objective of ILO action in this field is the increased capacity of member States to prevent or significantly reduce the incidence of occupational accidents and work-related diseases and to improve the working environment. This action continued to focus on developing standards and guidance, providing training to constituents and disseminating information on occupational hazards.

Preparations were made during the biennium for the launching of the new ILO Global

Examples of the results of **ILO occupational safety and health technical cooperation activities** include:

- The development in *China* of a pilot mine safety training programme for village- and township-owned coal mines. Based on a survey of 22 coal mines, the principal occupational safety and health problems were identified, training requirements analysed and pilot training packages developed. The packages were used in four training courses for 120 managers, supervisors and workers in small mines and the programme, which is supported by the Ministry of Coal, will be extended to all regions and provinces where village and township coal mines exist.
- The strengthening of the factory inspectorate in *Lesotho*. Training materials were translated into the Sesotho language and posters produced. Through

the organization of 14 tripartite seminars and some 50 training courses, the factory inspectorate was reactivated and regulations formulated and adopted on noise, spray painting, welding and cutting and chemical safety. Regulations were also drafted on other safety issues.

- The adoption in *Viet Nam* of two national action programmes on occupational safety and health in fisheries and construction covering the years 1998-2005. The occupational safety and health situation in fisheries and construction, which are two of the most dangerous sectors in Viet Nam, was studied and the reports discussed at tripartite national seminars. Training materials have been translated into Vietnamese and used in eight training courses for employers and workers in both industries.

Little is known about the **occupational safety and health situation in the informal sector**, which normally falls outside national statistical and reporting systems. To help fill this gap, a survey was conducted of over 1,500 urban and rural informal sector workers in *Zimbabwe*. The findings of the survey, namely 131 work-related injuries per 1,000 workers, 116 work-related illnesses per 1,000 workers and an occupational mortality rate of 12.49 per 100,000, are all comparable with the figures for formal sector workers in countries with reliable reporting systems.

However, the operations carried out by informal sector workers tend to be poorly organized, the work environment is hardly ever designed for the activities in question and work often takes place in the open air. Rural work includes various tasks related to agriculture, which is usually two to three times more dangerous than the average. The figures therefore tend to confirm the potential for an improvement in the safety and health situation of informal sector workers through simple and low-cost safety measures.

Programme on Occupational Safety, Health and Environment, with the aim of bringing about lasting improvements in occupational safety and health. The priority of the Global Programme will be to ensure that the positive values of a strong safety, health and environmental culture are integrated at all levels in the globalization process as an urgent and critically important element of social stability and sustainable economic development. Current technical cooperation activities in Central America, Asia and French-speaking and southern African countries will be integrated into the new Programme. A framework document was prepared for the Programme, which will commence activities in 1998.[32]

Reliable information on the scope and impact of occupational accidents and work-related diseases is vital if the underlying issues are to be addressed effectively. To assist constituents in the compilation of the necessary data, the ILO Code of practice on the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases was published in 1996 [33] and has since been widely distributed. Current ILO estimates indicate that over one million deaths annually can be attributed to work-related causes, of which one-quarter are the result of accidents and three-quarters of occupational diseases. The burden of occupational risk factors is even greater when years of life lost (YLLs), years lived with disability (YLDs) and disability adjusted life years (DALYs) are taken into account. An initiative was launched in collaboration with WHO and the Baltic countries to develop better indicators of the overall impact of occupational safety and health measures. A survey of occupational risks in the informal sector in Zimbabwe was also carried out with a view to providing indicative data on a sector for which information is not generally available.[34]

The ILO has taken the lead in pioneering innovative approaches to the improvement of safety and health in agriculture and the informal sector. Safety and health in agriculture frequently receive less attention from national authorities than problems in other sectors. This is partly due to the greater emphasis that is often placed on industrial development and partly because of the difficulties involved in dealing with safety and health issues in a very complex sector covering a great variety of activities. Moreover, agriculture is excluded from labour laws and occupational safety and health regulations

A **pilot project on safety and health in the informal sector** was implemented in Dar es Salaam. Initiated under the 1994-95 interdepartmental project on the informal sector, health promotion committees were set up covering 11 clusters of micro-enterprises. Over 60 committee members were trained and basic information tools, including checklists, posters and comics in Swahili, were produced for their use. Training consisted mainly of participatory learning techniques at the workplace, leading to the integration of low-cost corrective measures, such as basic safety measures, the rearrangement of the workplace, the modification of table and stool heights, changes in work practices and the appropriate use of tools.

Ten committee members were trained in first aid in collaboration with the Red Cross. Their training included the provision of health care services, the maintenance of basic health records and health promotion activities. Nearly 30 city council health providers were also trained in occupational health and visited the clusters once a week to carry out health promotion activities, including basic sanitation, immunization campaigns and contact with the first-aiders. Five of the clusters are also covered by the UMASIDA health insurance scheme (described below in the section on social security).

An evaluation of the project carried out at the end of the biennium found much greater awareness among workers of safety and health problems, better housekeeping practices at the workplace and evidence of a decrease in the number of minor injuries.

in many countries. A model strategy was drawn up and tested in a technical cooperation project in Central America. Inter-institutional coordination was promoted between the various responsible ministries and institutions and the social partners, with tripartite national committees being set up in each participating country for the development of a national programme on occupational safety and health in agriculture, including the updating of the relevant legislation. Using awareness-raising activities, information and training as the main tools, emphasis was placed on the extension of occupational health services to agricultural workers through the primary health care structure. Guidelines on ergonomic measures for agricultural workers were also developed and tested in national seminars in Costa Rica and Panama.[35] Methods of improving safety and health in the informal sector were tested in a project in the United Republic of Tanzania, which was based on clusters of micro-enterprises, and in a number of action programmes in the Philippines. The experience gained from these action programmes led up to the launching of a regional programme covering the Philippines, Nepal and Malaysia. The methodology adopted by the above programme combines the approaches used in the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) and Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE) programmes (see Chapter 5).

International labour standards on occupational safety and health provide an important benchmark for national policies and action, as well as defining the international environment in which companies operate. The key standards in this respect are the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161). During the biennium, 12 new ratifications of safety and health Conventions were registered. The Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174), entered into force in 1997 and, now that it has received four ratifications, the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176), will come into force in 1998.

The improved application of these standards was pursued through the provision of technical support in several countries. Constituents in Bulgaria and the Russian Federation were assisted with the implementation of occupational safety and health policies, while a seminar was conducted for women trade unionists in the Philippines to train them to become safety and health instructors. Capacity-building activities included the development of guidance materials on such important components of occupational safety and health policies as

national safety councils and bipartite occupational safety and health committees, occupational health services and workers' health surveillance.[36] The role of occupational health services in national health protection and promotion strategies was examined in two international workshops held in Singapore and France in collaboration with WHO.

The surveillance of workers' health has always been an important component of preventive health care. However, there was a need to reassess workers' health surveillance within the framework of a global strategy of occupational health for all and in the light of the new definition of occupational health adopted by the Joint ILO/WHO Committee on Occupational Health in 1995. A meeting of experts was therefore held in September 1997 to review current practice and prepare guidelines. The guidelines, which are intended for governments and employers' and workers' organizations, as well as occupational health and public health professionals, provide assistance in the design and implementation of comprehensive workers' health surveillance systems at the national and enterprise levels.[37]

Occupational respiratory diseases constitute an important occupational health problem. Diseases caused by dusts, and particularly silica dust and asbestos, remain a serious occupational health issue in many countries, while the incidence of allergic respiratory diseases and occupational asthma is escalating rapidly. Capacity-building activities to combat this problem included training for specialists in the use of the ILO International Classification of Radiographs of Pneumoconioses in national training workshops in China, Costa Rica and Indonesia. Experts from all over the world, meeting at the Ninth International Conference on Occupational Respiratory Diseases (ICORD) in Kyoto in October 1997, reviewed a revised and simpler version of the Classification. A draft code of practice on safety in the use of insulation wools was also developed during the biennium and will be reviewed by a meeting of experts to be held in 1999. Further to a recommendation made by the Joint ILO/WHO Committee on Occupational Health in 1995, the ILO and WHO prepared a joint ILO/WHO international programme towards the global elimination of silicosis. Silicosis is a preventable disease and experience in a number of countries has demonstrated convincingly that it is possible to reduce its incidence significantly through cost-effective programmes. The joint ILO/WHO programme is designed to mobilize the international scientific community and encourage countries to adopt their own national programmes. In this respect, the national workshops in China and Indonesia referred to above both recommended the adoption of national programmes to combat silicosis.

The development of authoritative international guidance was also pursued in a number of other areas, including ergonomics, safety in the use of biological agents, ambient factors and occupational radiation protection. A manual on ergonomic checkpoints was published in 1996.[38] The manual was promoted in seminars in Mauritius, the United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand and South Africa. Its translation has been commenced or is planned into Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, Farsi, French, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese and Thai. A draft code of practice on ambient factors in the workplace was also prepared, covering noise, vibration, temperature, humidity, illumination and radiation.[39] The code of practice is intended to provide comprehensive guidance on the application of the Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148), and will be submitted to a tripartite meeting of experts for revision and approval during the biennium 1998-99. In response to the resolution adopted by the Governing Body in 1993 concerning

exposure to and safety in the use of biological agents at work, preparations were begun on guidelines on this subject for the use of government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations and other interested groups. The ILO also cooperated with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the development of a safety guide on occupational radiation protection.[40]

World Congresses on Occupational Safety and Health are a regular landmark of national and international cooperation in the field of occupational safety and health. Organized by the ILO, the International Social Security Association (ISSA) and the host country, the XIVth World Congress in Madrid in April 1996 was attended by some 2,500 participants from 110 countries who, among other activities, discussed the ILO's paper on the implications of globalization for occupational safety and health.[41] Preparatory work has begun for the XVth World Congress, to be held in São Paulo in 1999. At the international level, the ILO continued to expand its cooperation with WHO, particularly through its participation in the formulation of WHO Regional Plans of Action for Occupational Health in Europe and the Caribbean.

Safety and health information services

A large proportion of the deaths and injuries suffered by workers every year can be attributed to inadequate safety and health information. The compilation and dissemination of safety and health information in a readily usable and internationally comparable form is a major instrument in the prevention of occupational accidents and work-related diseases. The objectives of ILO action in this field are:

- the availability to constituents of authoritative and ready-to-use occupational safety and health information;
- the development of the capacity of national services to use safety and health information more effectively; and
- an expansion of networking between national safety and health information services.

The backbone of these activities is the International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre (CIS), which is the focal point of a network of some 120 National and Collaborating Centres.

Full use was made during the biennium of the potential of the Internet to improve access to information and networking between CIS centres. A description of the services provided by CIS, full information on selected occupational safety and health products, the CIS database CISDOC and hyperlinks to the e-mail addresses and Web sites of CIS centres are all available through the CIS home page, which is itself accessible through the ILO Web site. The English-French-Spanish CIS Thesaurus, which serves as the basis for the indexing of *CIS Bulletins* and the CISDOC data-

The **Asian-Pacific Regional Network on Occupational Safety and Health** makes available to participating institutions and national authorities in the region a large quantity of information using both conventional and electronic methods. The Network's Internet site is located in Thailand (http://www.nectec.or.th/bureaux/un/asia-osh/index.html). Examples of the network's use during the biennium included:

- the provision of vital information to the *Philippines* on methane gas explosions following a coal mine disaster; and
- rapid exchanges of information on fire prevention prompted by the outbreak of fires in the region, which have caused multiple fatalities.

Examples of the **strengthening of capacities for the dissemination of information on occupational safety and health issues** during the biennium included:

- the creation in *Mali* in September 1997 of the African Centre for the Prevention of Occupational Risks (CAPRP), which trains instructors and disseminates information at the national and subregional levels;
- the establishment in 1996 in *Thailand* of the National Chemical Safety Network, linking agencies, institutions and organizations concerned with chemical safety; and
- the strengthening of the National Occupational Safety and Health Information Network in *Viet Nam*, through assistance in the creation of electronic databases and the provision of information from the regional network.

base, will also be made available on the Internet during the biennium 1998-99.

Technical cooperation activities covering some 40 countries helped to develop and strengthen networking between occupational safety and health institutions, particularly in Asian countries. The development of Internet sites, the organization of training workshops on occupational safety and health information and the provision of safety and health references through CIS centres have all served to improve the flow of information on safety and health issues at the workplace. Assistance activities were particularly intensive in Mongolia, Thailand and Viet Nam. Links were improved between occupational safety and health institutions in Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Mali and Niger and the global network of safety and health centres. A network was also established between occupational safety and health institutions in several southern African countries, while training activities were organized to strengthen the involvement of workers' representatives in occupational safety and health matters in the region. Information on regional activities was provided in the *African newsletter on occupational safety and health* and the *Asian-Pacific newsletter on occupational safety and health*, both of which appeared six times during the biennium.

The CIS's work of compiling occupational safety and health information centred around the collection of over 100,000 recent publications, of which some 4,000 were summarized and indexed. The summaries appear in the bimonthly *Safety and health at work: ILO/CIS Bulletin*, which is also available in French and Spanish. The full information is stored and disseminated through the CIS microfiche collection. In this work, priority is given to legislation published at the national and international levels, training materials and publications responding to the concerns expressed by constituents. By way of illustration, in response to the resolution adopted

ILO Encyclopaedia of occupational health and safety

The Fourth Edition of the ILO *Encyclopaedia of occupational health and safety*, one of the world's major works of reference, was finalized during the biennium for publication in a four-volume print version and on CD-ROM.

The Encyclopaedia is intended for a worldwide audience of specialists and non-specialists alike, including workers, trade union leaders, managers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, engineers, industrial hygienists, toxicologists and regulators. It provides comprehensive coverage of all their fields and the information that they require on other disciplines.

The new presentation and expanded contents of the Fourth Edition were developed through an intensive process of consultation with leading experts and health and safety institutions throughout the world. Drafted and edited by recognized authorities, each article has been peer-reviewed to ensure accuracy and relevance. A network of more than 2,000 specialists from over 60 countries, drawn from nearly every professional organization and major academic, governmental and non-profit institution involved in occupational safety and health, contributed to the design, drafting and review of this international classic.

by the Governing Body in 1993 concerning exposure to and safety in the use of biological agents at work, over 100 documents on this subject were reviewed and included in the CISDOC database, with the summaries published in the *Bulletin*.

With a view to the production of safety and health information in a form that is particularly appropriate for use in small enterprises, a project was launched for the production of data sheets on occupational hazards. Based on standard phrases to ensure their consistency and facilitate machine translation, a start was made with the production of some 20 data sheets, which were reviewed by collaborating agencies.

The main event of the biennium as regards the compilation of safety and health information was the finalization of the fourth edition of the ILO *Encyclopaedia of occupational health and safety*.[42]

Environment and the world of work

In the follow-up to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and other subsequent major conferences aimed at promoting sustainable development based on social justice and meaningful and healthy employment, environmental issues have become integral to many of the ILO's activities, including the assistance that it provides for labour administrations, employers' and workers' organizations, enterprise development and, of course, in the field of occupational safety and health. The ILO has also stepped up its collaboration with other United Nations agencies in a number of fields, including chemical safety, and participated in several international conferences and meetings relevant to environment and the world of work. These included the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in June 1997, to review achievements five years after UNCED, where the ILO presented an overview of its contributions to the goal of sustainable development.

As a result of ILO activities, particularly to strengthen employers' and workers' organizations, bipartite and tripartite dialogue has been established in several countries, including Chile, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, to discuss issues of workplace environmental training, social services and environmental protection. In Chile, an initiative has been developed for the mapping of hazards in the mining industry (see box) and a national tripartite commission adopted a code of practice for forestry. In Sri Lanka the management and workers in a number of enterprises have agreed to collaborate for the identification and introduction of cleaner production methods.

A good example of **collaboration between the social partners in the field of environment and the world of work** is the occupational and environmental hazard mapping initiative in *Chile*. Hazard mapping is a technique originally pioneered by Italian trade unions and subsequently taken up by health and safety institutions in Spain and several Latin American countries. It involves the identification of potential hazards by workers and employers, their assessment and the adoption of solutions.

Initially launched in Chile by the Mineworkers' Federation with the support of the ILO, safety and health specialists from the mine inspectorate, the national health institute and the labour inspectorate, the project obtained the full cooperation of several mining companies for joint hazard mapping and prevention in plants and mines. In a climate of adversarial labour relations, it provided an opportunity for contact and dialogue between employers and workers' representatives. The Mineworkers' Federation went on to organize successful national conferences on the subject in 1996 and 1997, which were attended by the Minister of Labour and managers from several companies. The project is highly regarded in Chile and has clear potential for replication elsewhere.

Hazard symbols, originally proposed by the ILO in the 1950s, which have since been almost universally adopted, with minor variations, as warnings concerning explosive, inflammable and toxic substances respectively.

The ILO's principal contribution to environmental issues during the biennium was related to chemical safety. The importance of chemical safety and the fact that chemicals constitute around four-fifths of industrial hazards are not often fully appreciated. In the promotion of chemical safety worldwide, great importance needs to be attached to the development of standardized and globally understood labels and signs. It is also necessary to produce an effective and clear instrument for the dissemination of essential information on chemical hazards at the workplace, and particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises. In the activities carried out in this field, the ILO worked closely with other specialized agencies and international organizations, particularly within the respective frameworks of the joint WHO/ILO/UNEP International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), created in 1994 to reach a consensus between countries on global priorities for action, and the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC). In all of these activities, emphasis was placed on the full participation of experts from employers' and workers' organizations.

In a globalized world in which chemical products and workers cross national borders with increasing frequency, it is of great importance to develop a universally recognized harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals. In close collaboration with the United Nations' ECOSOC Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and the OECD, the formulation of a set of proposed classification criteria and tests for 14 hazard categories was completed. Following the development by the end of 1999 of a set of harmonized chemical hazard communication tools, including labelling, chemical safety data sheets and training activities, the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) should be available and in use by the year 2000, as recommended by UNCED. Over the years, the ILO's work on the labelling of chemicals has had a very broad impact, with many of the signs and symbols designed by the ILO being incorporated into international and regional labelling systems, such as that developed by the European Union. These symbols are highly visible in everyday life, from the workplace to supermarkets, chemical containers and transport facilities.

Under the auspices of the IPCS, the ILO also continued to manage the development, translation and dissemination of International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSCs) for the communication of clear and standardized information on the properties of chemical substances at the workplace.[43]

An action programme on *Safety in the use of chemicals at work* was undertaken during the biennium with the objective of strengthening national capacity, including that of employers' and workers' organizations, to design and implement national programmes for the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals and their waste products. A number

International Chemical Safety Cards

International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSCs) are designed to provide a clear summary of essential health and safety information on chemical substances for use at the workplace by workers, employers and officials responsible for safety and health. In particular, they constitute a practical means of providing this important information to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Although ICSCs have no legal status, the information provided broadly conforms to the Chemicals Convention (No. 170) and Recommendation (No. 177), 1990, as well as the relevant European Union Directives. ICSCs are subjected to peer review by specialized institutions in member States, taking into account the advice provided by manufacturers, the social partners and other specialized institutions.

ICSCs are created and updated using standard phrases which, once they have been established in the various languages, are translated directly using special software. In addition to English, French, Spanish and German, ICSCs are available in many other languages, including Japanese, Chinese and Swahili. The translation of ICSCs into Russian, Korean, Urdu, Sinhalese, Arabic and Vietnamese is also ongoing or planned. The cards are currently available on the Internet in Japanese, and will soon be accessible on line in English, French, Spanish and other languages. A Chemical Safety CD-ROM was produced during the biennium containing over 1,000 ICSCs in English, Finnish and Swahili, as well as chemical safety training modules, a manual on pesticide safety and the relevant ILO Conventions, Recommendations and codes of practice.

A large number of enterprises subscribe to the CD-ROM version of the cards produced by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. The Spanish version of the cards, produced by the Spanish National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, is distributed in Spain and throughout Latin America. The Swahili version has been disseminated to enterprises in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda through ILO technical cooperation projects.

An ILO study on **law and practice relating to chemical safety in Asia** found strong inter-ministerial coordination for chemical safety policy implementation in *Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman* and the *Syrian Arab Republic*. It also noted progress in the field of chemical safety in:

- *China*, which ratified the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), in 1994 and is taking action to fully implement the provisions of the Convention, including the development of a national system for the classification and labelling of chemicals;
- *Lebanon*, where the process of the modernization of occupational safety and health legislation includes the establishment of interministerial committees and where the Ministry of Labour is strengthening its chemical safety inspection capabilities in coordination with the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Environment; and
- *Malaysia*, where the adoption of the Occupational Safety and Health (Classification, Packaging and Labelling of Hazardous Chemicals) Regulations, 1997, provide the legal framework for safety measures for a large group of industrial chemicals.

of guidance materials were prepared, including a guide on chemical risk assessment in small and medium-sized enterprises,[44] a textbook for secondary schools on safety in the use of chemicals [45] and chemical safety pages for 20 priority chemicals, which will be made available on the Internet. This work was presented at a series of national and subregional training seminars held in Bahrain, Bangladesh, Lebanon and Mauritius.

One of the keys to successful action to improve chemical safety at both the national and international levels is to ensure adequate coordination between the authorities and institutions competent in such fields as labour matters, economic and industrial development, public health and agriculture, all of which bear some responsibility for safety in the use of chemicals. Without such coordination, it is not uncommon to find that unharmonized and, in some cases, conflicting regulations and directives have been formulated. The need for interministerial coordination was therefore emphasized in the activities carried out in the framework of the action programme, as well as that of enhanced

coordination at the international level. These issues were examined in a study of law and practice in the field of chemical safety in Asia[46] and in a comparative analysis of the chemical safety activities of the ILO, OECD, UNEP and FAO.[47]

Conditions of work

Competitive pressures in globalized economies, resource constraints in the public sector and the privatization of public enterprises mean that governments, employers and workers are facing a growing dilemma as far as working conditions are concerned. In many cases, an uneasy compromise has emerged between strategies which emphasize economic imperatives and the need for flexible responses, and those which focus on investment in human resource development. There is a need not only to strengthen basic worker protection, but also to develop appropriate types of protection adapted to new forms of work, working relationships and work environments.

It is against this background that the ILO has implemented a programme of activities to improve working conditions, with the underlying theme that working conditions and the organization of work are key components of the competitive equation at any workplace. The principal objectives of ILO activities in this field are increased awareness by constituents of the need to provide essential protection to workers; broader acceptance of the fact that good working conditions lead to greater efficiency and productivity; and the adoption by constituents of policies and programmes to protect the dignity of workers and improve their working conditions.

Home work standards

The Home Work Convention (No. 177), adopted by the Conference in 1996, contains a definition of home work. Its main requirements for ratifying States are:

- the adoption, implementation and periodic review of a national policy on home work aimed at improving the situation of homeworkers, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers and, where they exist, with organizations concerned with homeworkers and employers of homeworkers;
- the promotion through the national policy on home work, as far as possible, of equality of treatment between homeworkers and other wage-earners, particularly in relation to:
  - the right of homeworkers to establish or join organizations of their own choosing;
  - protection against discrimination in employment and occupation;
  - remuneration;
  - statutory social security protection;
  - access to training;
  - minimum age for admission to employment or work; and
  - maternity protection;
- the application of national laws and regulations on safety and health at work to home work, taking account of its special characteristics;
- where the use of intermediaries in home work is permitted, the determination of the respective responsibilities of employers and intermediaries by laws and regulations or by court decisions, in accordance with national practice; and
- the implementation of a system of inspection for home work.

The Home Work Recommendation (No. 184) supplements these provisions with further guidance in such areas as the supervision of home work, minimum age, remuneration, occupational safety and health, working time, social security and maternity protection, termination of employment, the resolution of disputes and programmes related to home work.

A three-year **Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE)** project in the *Philippines* came to an end in 1997. The project is considered by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to be a "flagship" project among its activities to assist small enterprises, and a commitment has been made to institutionalize WISE throughout the country, with the WISE approach constituting an integral component of DOLE's objectives and activities.

A DOLE publication provides illustrations of the improvements in working conditions brought about in the Philippines through the WISE project, including:

- better storage facilities for heavy tools and objects, thereby decreasing the risk of them falling and injuring workers, workers accidentally knocking into them and damage to equipment, as well as clearing passageways and improving mobility around the workplace;
- the design and introduction of various machine guards, dust collectors and receptacles for sharp cuttings and other products of manufacturing processes;
- the construction of additional windows to improve illumination and air quality;
- various ergonomic improvements, such as foot rests, fixtures to hold rolls of cloth in an easily accessible position and simple carts to transport heavy objects; and
- improved layout of the workplace, resulting in better access to tools and machines and a lower risk of falls and collisions.

The high social and economic cost of **violence at work** is illustrated by the following examples:

- in countries such as *Australia, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom* and *United States*, ganging up on and mobbing targeted staff members is reported to be on the increase and is estimated, for example, to have contributed to between 10 and 15 per cent of suicides in Sweden;
- in *Japan*, the loss of lifetime job security and seniority systems in many cases appears to have been accompanied by bullying of white-collar workers, with counsellors reporting nearly 2,000 requests for consultations over two short periods in 1996 over a "bullying hot-line" set up by the Tokyo Managers Union; and

As traditional models of employment and employment patterns change, protection needs to be adapted. In 1994, the Conference adopted the Part-time Work Convention (No. 175) and Recommendation (No. 182) to provide appropriate protection to the growing numbers of part-time workers. To extend the protection available to another expanding category of workers, the Conference adopted the Home Work Convention (No. 177) and Recommendation (No. 184) in 1996. The home work standards are being used widely by associations of homeworkers and trade unions for advocacy purposes and for the design of measures to assist and protect homeworkers.

An important focus of activities to improve working conditions continued to be the Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE) programme. Training workshops using this methodology were held in Costa Rica, Cuba, Honduras, Indonesia, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Seychelles, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Technical cooperation projects were prepared for Kenya, Seychelles and Uganda. The WISE manual, which is available in English, French, Spanish, Bahasa Indonesia, Hungarian, Portuguese and Thai, was also translated into Vietnamese.[48] The manual was adapted in the Philippines to help workers make improvements in small enterprises.[49] Using the WISE framework, a manual was also prepared for the garment industry, which employs a large number of women and is a major export industry in many developing countries.[50]

The ILO continued to be at the forefront in addressing the protection of workers' dignity and equality in the workplace, notably in its recent work on workers' privacy and on workplace violence. A Meeting of Experts on Workers' Privacy, held in October 1996, adopted an ILO Code of practice on the protection of workers' personal data to address the new possibilities offered by modern technology for the collection, use and transfer of workers' personal data and monitoring and surveillance at the workplace.[51] The code of practice has aroused considerable interest in several countries. Draft legislation based on the code has been prepared in Argentina. The code has been translated into Finnish

- in the *United States*, homicide is the second leading cause of occupational deaths, and the first cause for women, with an average of 20 workers being murdered a week and non-fatal assaults resulting in severe losses through injuries.

by the tripartite Finnish National ILO Committee. It was used as background material for the annual Privacy Issues Forum, held in New Zealand, and it received good press coverage. On the issue of violence at work, a study to be published in early 1998 reviews successful methods of prevention and highlights best practice.[52] Intended in particular for health and safety professionals, personnel managers and employers' and workers' organizations, the publication draws attention to a problem which has a high social and economic cost.

Social security

Many national social protection systems are facing dramatic changes. Industrialized countries are reviewing the affordability, effectiveness and efficiency of their social security systems in the context of persistently high levels of unemployment, the re-emergence of poverty, the globalization of their economies, the ageing of the population, shifting patterns of work and life, and changing societal values. Adaptations of classical models of social security are being developed in the newly industrializing Asian countries. In many developing countries, the simple transfer of social security concepts from the industrialized world has failed over the past decade and newer, more modest and more appropriate systems are being sought for the provision of some degree of protection to the population. These concerns and the reform proposals made in several countries have led the ILO, as well as other international organizations, to reflect on new directions for pensions policy.

Indications of the **progress achieved in the field of social security in member States**, with ILO assistance, include:

- *Costa Rica*, where ILO comments on the draft basic law on social security have been included in the final text that is under examination by the Congress;
- *Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines* and *Namibia*, where projects are commencing which reflect a commitment by the governments concerned to carry out reforms based on earlier ILO guidance;
- *Latvia*, where, following ILO advice on the application of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), the Government has started to introduce changes in the national legislation, including reforms of unemployment and pension benefits;
- *United Republic of Tanzania* and *Zambia*, where legislation has been adopted to establish national pension schemes covering employees in the formal sector; and
- *Thailand*, where the social security scheme set up under an ILO project in 1990 is functioning satisfactorily and where steps are now being taken to extend the range of benefits to include pensions and family benefits, in addition to health care.

The objectives of ILO action in relation to social security are:

- the design and operation of social security systems which embody the objectives of social equity, income support and maintenance, and economic efficiency;
- the conformity of benefit levels at least with the minima established in the relevant ILO Conventions;
- the coverage by social security schemes of the widest possible proportion of the population; and
- the management and operation of national social security schemes in accordance with sound management practices and the relevant legislation.

The activities carried out to pursue these objectives consisted of assistance in the establish-

ment and development of social security schemes and legislation, actuarial support for the operation of social security systems and the compilation and dissemination of quantitative information on the operation of national social protection schemes. In addition, three action programmes were carried out covering, respectively: the development of a framework for planning social security reforms; the improvement of the governance of social security schemes; and the extension of coverage to population groups not currently protected by traditional social security schemes. These activities were designed to address fundamental issues relating to social security standards, provide practical guidance for reforms of social security systems and develop the ILO's standing as a major force in national and international discussions on the future of social protection policies.

Over 40 countries benefited from technical cooperation and advisory services in the field of social security during the biennium. Technical assistance was provided for the development of draft legislation covering social security matters in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela. Advisory services were also provided concerning multilateral social security agreements in the member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and are planned for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and southern African countries. Despite some policy differences, the ILO collaborated closely with both the World Bank and the IMF on technical advisory work in several countries, including Azerbaijan, the Philippines, Turkey, Ukraine and Zambia.

In response to requests from many social security institutions, especially in developing countries, a set of five training manuals was prepared covering pensions, financing, health care, social security principles and administration.[53] Accompanied by a trainers' guide and transparencies, these will provide the basis for training courses on social security. The development of training materials in French also continued, while key social security guides and reports were translated into Chinese and Russian. In collaboration with the Turin Centre, courses were conducted for Russian- and Chinese-speaking social security officials. A training programme was also carried out to increase workers' representatives' awareness of social security concepts in Bangladesh, Eritrea and Viet Nam.

With the objective of improving the access of constituents to the financial, actuarial and quantitative assessments required for the design of social security schemes and their efficient management and operation, the ILO continued to provide technical assistance on quantitative methodologies to national social protection systems and specific social security schemes. A combined actuarial and social budget project was completed in Turkey and a project was undertaken on the institutional budget of the newly independent National Social Security Institution in Bulgaria. Technical advisory services were provided in 20 countries and technical support was delivered in the context of 11 technical cooperation projects. Training was also organized for officials responsible for social security in Bulgaria, Latvia, Turkey, Ukraine and Viet Nam, as well as for specialists from English-speaking Caribbean countries, sub-Saharan African countries and English-speaking African countries. A training course on social budgeting techniques was held in Santiago de Chile in September 1997. In support of the ILO's training activities, textbooks were prepared on the actuarial aspects of social security pensions [54] and quantitative techniques for the financing of statutory health-care schemes.[55] The effectiveness of the support provided through these activities is illustrated by the continu-

ing consultation processes established with constituents, following technical cooperation or training activities, in Benin, Bulgaria, Senegal, Thailand and Ukraine. A brief publication was produced during the biennium to inform constituents of the services available to them from the ILO's International Financial and Actuarial Service.[56]

As a basis for this work, important improvements were made to the ILO actuarial model. The Social Budget Model was further developed and now serves as a framework for all models for specific branches of national social protection systems. It links overall national social expenditure to demographic and economic development and shows the impact of social expenditure and its financing on the state budget. It is therefore a major tool for the macro-financial and macro-fiscal management of the whole social sector. A preliminary technical guide was widely circulated in 1996 and was further developed in 1997.[57] Pension, health and wage distribution models were also developed.[58] They are available on diskette, operate on standard personal computers and are considered to be freeware for governments and social security institutions in member States. During the biennium, these models were transferred to countries in which training in their use could be organized. Beneficiary countries included the Bahamas, Bulgaria, Burundi, Turkey, Viet Nam and Zambia, followed by Colombia, Panama, Thailand and Ukraine. Some indication of the significance of the models is given by the requests received for presentations of the social budget modelling approach from the World Bank, IMF and Inter-American Development Bank, as well as by the ILO's collaboration with the World Bank in the development of models in Ukraine and in technical cooperation activities in Bulgaria.

The availability of internationally comparable and up-to-date information on expenditure on social security is becoming increasingly important for the formulation of national social policy. Comparative information and guidance continued to be provided for policy-makers, planners and experts through the ILO inquiry into the cost of social security.[59] The results of the latest inquiry, covering the years up to 1993, were published on the Internet on the ILO Web site in early 1997. A new concept was developed to make the series compatible with the EUROSTAT database for European countries. Although it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the provision of information to constituents through this unique database, the willingness of EUROSTAT and OECD to collaborate with the ILO serves as an indicator of the value placed on this information source by their constituents.

A range of research and analytical activities were also carried out as a basis for the dissemination of information and the provision of guidance on specific topics in the field of social protection. Research papers were published on social security financing, expenditure and modelling techniques. The ILO entered the policy debate on the future viability of national social protection in all regions by presenting papers at various conferences and meetings and publishing them as discussion papers.[60] The three action programmes also made a major contribution to supporting ILO advocacy in these policy debates.

Reform and development of social protection: A framework for planning

With a view to providing constituents with a framework for planning reforms and improvements in the operation of their social security systems, two action programmes were carried out. These were entitled *Reforming and developing systems of social protection: A framework for planning* and *Improving the governance, management, administration and operation of*

social security programmes. The experience of a wide range of countries in the reform of social protection systems, and the results of these reforms, were analysed in a series of reports on various aspects of the planning of social security reforms. These reports were then used as a basis for the consultation of constituents in a series of six seminars on old-age and other pensions held in Abidjan, Bangkok, Budapest, Harare, Lima and Paris. Each seminar was attended by five participants representing governments, employers and workers, and five participants from social security institutions. The discussions reflected the concerns of the participants with regard to the extension of coverage, the improvement of governance and management, and recent developments towards multi-tiered pension schemes, which may incorporate funded as well as unfunded financing and private as well as public components. The discussions, and the papers submitted to the seminars, will form the basis of a major publication which will appear in 1998. The views expressed at the meetings will be reflected in a report to the Governing Body in 1998.

This process of research and consultation led to the identification of viable options for the reform of national social protection systems. The findings of this work will be directly applicable to future technical cooperation activities and will be further refined in the action programme *An operational framework for social security*, which will be undertaken during the biennium 1998-99.

The performance of many social security schemes, particularly in developing countries, is hampered by inefficient management and governance. The process of consultation described above was therefore also designed to cover measures to improve the efficiency and governance of social security schemes. This process led to the development of two good practice manuals, which will be finalized during the course of 1998. One of the manuals will cover institutional arrangements and the role of the social partners, while the other will analyse the principal problems encountered in the administration of social security schemes and provide practical guidance on how to overcome them.

Social safety nets, social assistance and the prevention of poverty

Many people in developing countries, as well as a significant number in industrialized countries, do not have access to conventional social security schemes, or are too poor to join

The **UMASIDA health insurance scheme** was set up in December 1995 when five informal sector associations in Dar es Salaam formed an umbrella organization for the provision of health care to their members. Around 1,500 workers, as well as about 4,500 family members, are affiliated to the scheme. It covers all the primary health services required by its members, who are referred to government health care units for secondary and tertiary services, as well as complicated medical investigations.

The scheme is self-financing and contribution rates are equivalent to Tsh.20 per day per person and Tsh.40 per family (both figures represent well under 5 per cent of average daily earnings of informal sector workers). The contributions are made by the informal sector associations for their members. There are various modes of operation and contribution, depending on the association. These include a capitation fee (a fixed rate of contribution per capita in exchange for free health care from a local provider) and an enterprise clinic for one cooperative grouping some 1,000 workers. The enterprise clinic has been successful in substantially cutting the cost of primary health care for beneficiaries and in cutting accidents and work-related illnesses by holding health education seminars for members.

In 1998, it is planned to extend the scheme to five more informal sector associations in Dar es Salaam. Preparations have also been made for the replication of the scheme elsewhere in the United Republic of Tanzania and in Benin, El Salvador and India.

them on a voluntary basis. The problem is to develop viable means of providing social protection to these categories of the population, or alternatively of helping them develop their own mechanisms. An action programme was therefore carried out with the objective of developing a solid basis for the design and implementation of social protection measures for population categories which are currently unprotected or badly protected.

The analyses undertaken in the framework of the action programme resulted in the preparation of a publication on the present and future role of tax revenues in providing basic social protection for old age, health and other contingencies.[61] A study was also completed on social protection of informal sector workers in Colombia[62] as part of the 1994-95 interdepartmental project on the informal sector, while another covered social security in India.[63] As an extension of the interdepartmental project, a project was launched in Dar es Salaam for the establishment of a mutual benefit society for the provision of health care to informal sector workers (see box). The findings of this work were used for the development of a project document for an interregional social security project for the informal sector, supported by feasibility studies for Benin, El Salvador, India and the United Republic of Tanzania.[64] The work of the action programme included the preparation of a bibliography on social security for the informal sector [65] and an ILO policy paper on social security in the informal sector.[66] It may therefore be concluded that the action programme played an important role in identifying and developing viable forms of social protection for informal sector workers. However, emphasis now needs to be given to raising awareness among constituents and encouraging donors to support the widespread replication of these mechanisms.

Notes

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4 Turin Centre and International Institute for Labour Studies

The Turin Centre and the Institute are autonomous institutions, whose governing boards report to the ILO Governing Body. The Centre undertakes training and related activities in an increasingly wide range of technical fields as an integral part of ILO technical cooperation activities and in support of its other technical activities. The Institute carries out research and encourages networking in the field of emerging labour policy issues and acts as a catalyst for future ILO programme development.

Turin Centre

During the biennium 1996-97, the Turin Centre continued the reform process initiated under its first Development Plan, for the period 1990-95. A second Development Plan, approved by the Centre's Board in November 1995, confirms the pertinence of the objectives of the Centre and of the many changes made between 1990 and 1995 in the manner in which it operates. The second Development Plan identifies the following objectives for the Centre:

- mobilizing and disseminating, through training, the standards, experience and expertise acquired by the ILO and the United Nations system, and by other development partners;
- supporting through appropriate training actions the reform efforts undertaken within the multilateral development cooperation system;
- renewing and developing the Centre's range of training products on workers' rights, as well as on key areas of the United Nations development agenda, including human rights, governance and the management of development cooperation; and
- strengthening the capacities of governments and employers' and workers' organizations in the planning and management of the development process.

The period of transition experienced by the Centre has involved a major adaptation of the services that it provides. Training programmes and projects have expanded in coverage to include fields such as entrepreneurship training, social security, the reform and management of labour market institutions, industrial relations, human resource development and international labour law.

Originally consisting of short-term technical training provided at its own facilities in Turin, the Centre's services have been expanded to include advisory services related to its training activities, often under projects of several years' duration, in locations determined by the needs of the clients, including individual courses in enterprises. The Centre has acquired greater expertise in the field and has built up a network of collaborating institutions. It has also had to adapt to the more competitive environment of multilateral technical cooperation activities. It has therefore adopted a promotional strategy based on a diversification of its sources of financing and the design of training activities adapted to the needs of clients. It has also developed new training products targeted at programmes for which demand is high, with greater control over the quality of the training provided.

Projects carried out by the Centre for the **promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises** included:

- the promotion of micro-enterprise creation in *Guinea-Bissau*, especially by women, through the training of over 400 persons from the private sector, associations of SMEs and vocational training institutions; and
- the development of a scheme in *Hungary* to provide training to over 180 agents and consultants in several provincial centres of the Hungarian Foundation for Assistance to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, which involved training a target group of 21 instructors over a two-year period.

The lesson learned from the experience acquired over this period is that the training component of development projects must be thoroughly integrated with their other aspects. Moreover, the period of adaptation has shown that the Centre fulfils the mandate entrusted to it by the ILO when it has the means and opportunities to develop its specific competence for the benefit of ILO projects and programmes and those of the United Nations system as a whole. The successful adaptation of the Centre's programme is confirmed by the increase in the number of training projects and programmes from around 250 in 1994-95 to over 450 in 1996-97. The number of participants in these activities doubled to over 10,000 during the biennium.

One technical area in which the Centre's activities have particularly expanded is social security, notably in response to the need to train administrators of social security institutions in countries in transition. In collaboration with the Social Security Department at headquarters, a technical group was set up at the Centre and training materials were produced and tested on social security financing and pensions. Training plans were also prepared for social security institutions and technical cooperation projects. Examples of the assistance provided to countries in transition include a training programme for officials of various ministries and social security institutions in Ukraine on the adaptation and use of a model for the evaluation of social expenditure. Several training projects were implemented on the management of social security systems for African countries.

Another technical field in which the number of projects and programmes carried out by the Centre has increased rapidly is the management and creation of enterprises. Examples of the projects carried out include the strengthening of the training capacity of the Hungarian Foundation for Assistance to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and a project for the development of human resources and assistance in the creation of micro-enterprises in Guinea-Bissau.

In 1995, the **Government of China** requested the Centre to provide training for officials from the Ministry of Labour, several state enterprises and other government departments to familiarize them with the operation and reform of labour market institutions, with particular emphasis on the design of training and retraining plans. During the biennium, some 450 Chinese officials were trained in 22 courses. One particularly interesting aspect of the courses for the officials concerned was the opportunity to undertake study tours in European and other countries.

The reform of labour market institutions, including vocational and technical training systems, employment offices and agencies, and employment and industrial relations policies, was a major objective of the Centre's activities during the biennium. These activities concentrated on African countries which are implementing macroeconomic adjustment measures, Central and Eastern European countries and a small number of member States in South-East Asia. In addition, in the framework of the European Social Fund, the Centre provided training courses for over 1,300 Italian managers and officials in the fields of contract negotiation, cost

accountancy, vocational training and the monitoring and evaluation of social projects, with a view to strengthening the capacity of the Italian administration to manage and implement social projects financed with European Union funding.

Workers' education is a field in which the Centre's technical programme is totally integrated with that of ILO headquarters. The priorities, content and beneficiaries of the programme are determined by a committee composed of representatives of the Workers' group of the Governing Body of the Office. In addition to the training provided to reinforce the structures and methods of trade union training activities, a new generation of courses was produced on specific aspects of trade union action in such areas as the economic analysis of enterprises, industrial relations, techniques for the settlement of disputes and international labour standards. Over 600 trade union leaders from all regions benefited from this programme during the biennium. In 1997, a specific assistance and training programme was implemented for trade union organizations in the West Bank and Gaza.

Technical assistance and training projects were carried out in Latin America in the fields of flexible training techniques, skills analysis and quality control methods for vocational training. Moreover, each year a course is organized in collaboration with the University of Bologna with a view to establishing a network of Latin American and European experts on industrial relations.

The Centre's activities for the United Nations system were organized in the framework of the United Nations Staff College project. This project is structured around four technical areas:

- management training, which covers the training activities designed for United Nations programmes, funds and agencies, in the fields of management methods and techniques, human resources management and policies, and the management of change;
- training related to peace-keeping and peace-making activities;
- training related to the economic and social aspects of development, including the management of development aid; and
- a technical area designed to strengthen the coherence and coordination of the development programmes of the various partners in the United Nations system.

ILO staff also benefit from these activities, as in the case of the management workshops organized in 1996 and 1997 for higher-level ILO staff. In addition, the ILO benefits from opportunities to promote its values and demonstrate its experience on various aspects of social policy. Moreover, in specific programmes, such as the training designed in collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, the Turin Centre is able to include components on work-related rights and international labour standards. Another example is the formulation of strategy notes for individual countries. In 1996, the Centre was requested by UNDP to organize the workshop for the formulation of the strategy note for Senegal, in which various United Nations

The UNDP division responsible for **crisis and emergency situations** entrusted the Centre with responsibility for an interregional training programme for national officials and United Nations officials who might need to intervene in situations of emergency or humanitarian crisis. The principal objective of the project was to improve the management and coordination of the action taken by the various national and international partners in such situations. In this case, the Centre was able to draw on the ILO's experience of emergency programmes to create jobs, assist small enterprises and provide training for employment for demobilized soldiers.

programmes and funds participated. The ILO was able to participate actively in this exercise alongside other United Nations partners in the formulation of the United Nations development strategy for Senegal. The initiative was repeated for several other countries.

The delocalization of part of its activities and the need to improve the quality of its products have led the Centre to build up a network of cooperating institutions and centres. During the biennium, several international, national and regional institutions concluded cooperation agreements with the Centre, including:

- the Open University (London);
- the Global Affairs Institute of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University (New York);
- the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD);
- the Rover Group (United Kingdom);
- the Institute of Social Studies of The Hague;
- Helsinki University of Technology;
- the Asian Institute of Management (Philippines);
- Bocconi University (Italy); and
- the African Centre for Higher Education in Management (CESAG — Senegal).

International Institute for Labour Studies

The International Institute for Labour Studies fulfils a triple function in support of the ILO's activities:

- a *strategic* function, by identifying emerging labour policy issues and acting as a catalyst for future ILO programme development;
- an *outreach* function, by projecting the values and concerns of the ILO, enabling ILO constituents and staff to interact systematically with academics and policy-makers; and
- a *support* function, by helping ILO constituents develop their national institutional capacities for analysis and labour policy formulation, through international internship courses and fellowship programmes.

Strategic research and theoretical work have long gestation periods. At the strategic level, the contribution made by the Institute to the work of the Organization as a whole has to be seen in terms of its role as a catalyst for change, rather than its direct influence on the ILO's programmes themselves.

As part of its *outreach* function, the Institute took the initiative in bringing the ILO's concerns to the attention of the foreign policy community. An International Conference on Labour and the International Economy was organized in collaboration with the United States Council on

Participants at the International Conference on **Labour and the International Economy** concluded that:

- globalization has made national policy responses more, rather than less important;
- free trade and improved labour standards are both essential objectives;
- despite differences of view on their interrelationship, progress on core labour rights is relevant to sustaining the political momentum for open systems of international economic exchange; and
- excessive attention has been paid to trade sanctions, which has diverted attention from other national and international policy options, such as codes of conduct, industrial and training policies and technical cooperation.

Foreign Relations and the United Kingdom's Royal Institute of International Affairs in Geneva in March 1996. The Conference brought together academics, practitioners in both labour and foreign policy, trade unionists, business representatives and ILO staff to discuss globalization and its effects on labour, labour standards and rights, among other issues.

With a view to promoting the interface between the ILO and the academic community, six public lectures and staff seminars were given by eminent scholars and public figures. The Third ILO Social Policy Lectures, endowed by the ILO's Nobel Peace Prize, were held at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur in December 1997 on the theme of "Managing economic success: The social agenda". The President of the Korea Labour Institute delivered four lectures to the graduate students and faculty of the University's Department of Economics and Administration and to members of the general public. The lectures culminated in a panel discussion in which members of the ILO's tripartite constituency played a prominent part.

As part of its *support* function, the Institute organized two international internship courses on active labour market policy development, each of which was attended by about 25 future policy-makers drawn from the ILO's tripartite constituency. Under its student internship programmes, over a dozen graduate students participated in the Institute's activities and fellowships were provided to 11 visiting scholars from labour, research and educational institutions, or attached to governments or employers' or workers' organizations. The Institute's courses continue to be highly valued elements of its programme and play an important role in educating future national policy-makers as to the importance of the ILO's values and principles and in renewing the Organization's constituency.

In terms of its role in identifying emerging labour policy issues, the activities of the Institute were concentrated on two areas during the biennium:

- an analysis of the relationships between social exclusion, labour institutions and poverty; and
- an exploration of the changing global organization of production and its social implications at the local level.

Social exclusion

The Institute's activities on social exclusion in the previous biennium led up to the preparation of a publication on the subject [1] and its discussion at an international symposium held in conjunction with the Social Summit. The project was subsequently extended to include the elaboration of an approach to development based on social inclusion which reflects the ILO's concern with institutional change, human rights and social justice.

While the concept of social exclusion is well established in certain industrialized countries, it has been largely absent from the development debate in the non-industrialized world. Ten analytical studies were therefore undertaken to explore the links between employment, livelihood and citizenship rights in developing countries and countries in transition.[2] These studies examine the relevance of the concept of social exclusion to different countries at various stages of development, with varying economic and social characteristics. They show how a variety of mechanisms of exclusion, ranging from caste systems to formal and informal screening and selection procedures, systems of political patronage and the absence of

universal recognition of citizenship and economic rights, lead to the maintenance of poverty. They also point to the institutions, such as workers' and employers' organizations, and other social and occupational associations in civil society, which can reinforce social inclusion and economic empowerment.

The findings of this work were used to promote a wider debate within the international community and in developing countries. A Policy Forum on Social Exclusion was held in New York in May 1996, in parallel with the United Nations Commission for Social Development, which discussed the policy implications of a social exclusion approach, in particular with respect to the social effects of globalization and the design of anti-poverty strategies.[3] A Conference was also organized in Geneva in 1997, in collaboration with the University of Sussex, on "Overcoming social exclusion: The ILO contribution", which brought together ILO departments, labour and business practitioners and academics to review a research and policy agenda on social inclusion for the ILO.[4]

In this work, the Institute complemented existing notions of poverty by drawing attention to the role of the social actors and institutions in processes of inclusion. Through its collaboration with UNDP and the United Nations, it disseminated its findings to the international development community and other fora, such as the high-level conference for business and political leaders that it organized in 1997 in collaboration with the Government of Denmark on a "New partnership for social cohesion". The conference discussed the reasons why enterprises become involved in social initiatives and identified models of social commitment by enterprises based on partnership and voluntary interaction with governments and civil society.

New international industrial organization

A second set of activities was designed to identify new forms of global production networks and their implications for industrial upgrading and job creation at the local level. This involved the development of the concept of *global commodity chains*, which consist of the sequence of value-adding activities from primary inputs to the final distribution of a product or service. Based on a better understanding of the strategic behaviour of enterprises across industries and borders, the objective was to map out labour policy options for countries endeavouring to upgrade their participation in international markets, with the optimum benefits for the level and quality of jobs.

In collaboration with the International Trade Centre of the WTO and UNCTAD, an evaluation was undertaken of employment and trade data in selected industries to identify commodity chains through inter-firm linkages. This activity has provided an outline of the changing geography of production over the past two decades in eight industries, including garments, toys, pharmaceuticals and computers. It has also afforded an insight into the impact of trade on labour markets in both the industrialized and developing countries. Empirical studies were carried out in various locations in Africa, Asia and Latin America with a view to identifying labour policy requirements for the progression of local economic development from off-shore platforms towards more independent, higher value-added production bases with improved labour and working conditions. The studies showed that many locations which had been able to participate in international markets through their competitive advantage based

on low labour costs were now faced with the challenge of developing new factors of competitive advantage in order to respond to the emerging market requirements for efficiency, quality and organizational and product innovation. This implies significant investment in the development of skills and the greater involvement of employees in the production process with a view to increasing value-added production and sustaining growth. Enterprise initiatives and state policies need to complement each other in this process.

A workshop involving academic researchers, ILO experts and practitioners was held in May 1997 in Geneva on changing inter-firm relationships in key global industries. A Round Table was organized in the same month on globalization, industrial upgrading and export processing zones (EPZs) to allow academic experts and officials of the ILO and the Institute working in this area to review the findings of the project and exchange information on recent trends in EPZs. This work was carried out in cooperation with several ILO departments and multidisciplinary advisory teams, and contributed to the action programmes on EPZs and globalization, area-based enterprise development and employment.

Notes

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5 Active partnership: Regional activities

The active partnership policy has now been in operation for two full biennia. It has become clear over this period that the process of formulating and implementing country objectives has brought the ILO closer to its tripartite constituents at the national level and has also served as an important means of promoting tripartite interaction in member States. In several instances, there is evidence that the process has provided a stimulus for the beginnings of social dialogue where none, or very little, existed previously. In a number of cases, the national response to the active partnership policy has included the establishment or reactivation by the Ministry of Labour of a tripartite consultative committee to support the policy. The progress made in this respect has been consolidated through the implementation of the national programmes agreed upon by constituents, as well as in the process of the revision of country objectives, particularly in those countries in which they were first finalized. During the biennium, social dialogue has also been promoted at the national level, firstly, through the national steering committees set up in ILO-IPEC participating countries, in which the social partners are involved alongside other representatives of civil society, and secondly, through many of the activities undertaken to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women, for which tripartite national steering committees were also established in several countries.

The key instrument of the active partnership policy is the operation of a network of 14 multidisciplinary advisory teams in the regions. Already operational at the beginning of the biennium, the teams have added a multidisciplinary approach to many of the ILO's activities. In particular, the presence of specialists on employers' and workers' issues has led to a much more constant flow of information and advice to and from trade unions and employers' organizations. Preparations were also made during the biennium for the establishment of two further teams, which will become operational in 1998. One of these is located in Yaoundé and covers Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Zaire. The second is located in Moscow and covers Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

While there appears to be a consensus to the effect that the active partnership policy has already led to significant improvements in the ILO's operational activities, sufficient experience has now been accumulated to adjust and streamline it for the future. To identify possible improvements, an internal evaluation was undertaken and culminated in a workshop at the Turin Centre on the implementation of the policy. Towards the end of the biennium, a Working Party of the Governing Body carried out an evaluation, including visits to a number of countries. The Working Party's conclusions and recommendations will be submitted to the Governing Body in 1998.

The description of the ILO's regional activities contained in this chapter is organized according to the groups of countries covered by each multidisciplinary advisory team. Inevitably, similar areas of concern come up under many of the teams. In each case, for fuller information on the ILO's activities in specific technical areas, the reader may wish to refer back to the descriptions provided in the first three chapters of this report.

Africa

The combined effects on African countries of a long period of economic crisis, the structural adjustment programmes applied in response to the crisis and high rates of demographic growth have resulted in rising unemployment and underemployment, a fall in income and a worsening of poverty almost everywhere on the continent. Against this background, the reduced level of investment in the social sector and in the institutions responsible for labour matters has diminished their capacity to develop and implement the necessary solutions. Moreover, despite positive developments in certain countries, and particularly South Africa, the democratization process is still fragile and progress still needs to be made in most African countries in the fields of social dialogue, respect for human rights and social justice. The ILO's activities to combat unemployment, protect workers and promote democracy were severely hampered in several countries in which conflict broke out or continued during the biennium.

The initiatives taken at the regional level to assist member States in developing effective responses to these problems included the holding of the fifth biennial meeting of African employment planners in January 1997, which was open to all the social partners. One of the main points of discussion at the meeting was the Jobs for Africa programme, which is intended to strengthen the policy framework for employment creation and will be launched at the national level in several African countries in 1998.

During the biennium, the action of national and international development partners throughout the continent was marked by the adoption of increasingly harmonized approaches. The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, in which the ILO is playing an important role, served as a framework for greater harmonization of the activities of the specialized agencies in Africa. One area in which the development partners in Africa are showing greater coherence of approach is in their recognition of the need to take into account the effects of investment options on employment, with priority being given in many cases to employment-intensive methods. The more harmonized approach adopted on this and other issues resulted in part from ILO studies and experience, the conclusions of the two tripartite meetings held on the socio-economic consequences of the devaluation of the CFA franc (in Dakar in 1994 and Yaoundé in 1997) and discussions with donors.

With regard to the improved observance of the fundamental rights for which the ILO has special competence, several initiatives resulted in a better understanding between the ILO and the international financial institutions. Following the consultation between the ILO and the World Bank on the reform of labour codes in Africa, held in Washington in October 1995, an ILO/World Bank seminar was organized in Abidjan in June 1997 on the role of the social partners in the revision of labour codes. As a result of the meeting, it may be expected that work-related rights will be taken into account more fully in the process of the reform of labour legislation as a follow-up to the restructuring programmes supported by the Bretton Woods institutions.

In the follow-up to the Beijing Conference, some progress has also been made in several countries in promoting equality of opportunity and treatment for women. With the support of promotional, information and technical assistance activities, several countries, including Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and the United Republic of Tanzania, have

developed and implemented national and sectoral policies of equality for women. Several countries in the region, including Guinea-Bissau and Mali, have established ministerial structures responsible for implementing these policies. Examples of the action taken to follow up the Beijing Conference, in the case of Burkina Faso, include:

- the development and implementation of a plan of action for the education of girls;
- the creation of a fund to support income-earning activities for women in agriculture; and
- the adoption of new legislation on maternity protection.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, under the terms of the National Employment Policy adopted in 1997, priority is to be given to:

- strengthening the fund to provide loans to women;
- removing discriminatory laws against women, for example as regards land ownership and property inheritance;
- the assurance of employment without conditions related to gender; and
- encouraging women to acquire economic power through their involvement in commercial activities.

A number of countries in the region took important steps during the biennium towards the adoption of **policies and measures to combat child labour**, including:

- *Ethiopia*, where the first national workshop on child labour was held, bringing together representatives of the Government, the social partners, NGOs and other organizations representing civil society, who identified the principal elements of a national policy on child labour, which were submitted to the Government for approval;
- *Guinea*, where a workshop organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour adopted a programme of surveys to gather information on five target groups of working children, the results of which are intended to act as a basis for the elaboration of a national policy on child labour;
- *Kenya*, which has been an ILO-IPEC participating country since 1992, where over 20 action and mini-programmes were carried out during the biennium, a draft National Policy on Child Labour was developed and the legislation on child labour was reviewed; and
- *Senegal*, where the necessary measures were taken to permit the ratification of Convention No. 138, a national seminar was held, followed by the development of a national plan of action on child labour, and preparations were made for the implementation of a three-year IPEC programme.

On the issue of child labour, regional initiatives undertaken in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), UNICEF and African employers' and workers' organizations have resulted in increased awareness and the beginning of a change in attitude by constituents towards a problem that has not always been considered as such. Benin, Egypt, Kenya, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania are ILO-IPEC participating countries and as such have concluded Memoranda of Understanding with the programme. ILO-IPEC preparatory activities were carried out in nine other African countries. The experience of the action taken and the results achieved by the national programmes supported by ILO-IPEC were reviewed by a tripartite OAU meeting, held in collaboration with the ILO in Kampala in February 1998, which examined policies, measures and programmes that can be implemented in a concerted manner in Africa.

Another priority of ILO activities at the regional and subregional levels was in the field of social security. Traditional social security schemes in Africa only cover between 5 and 10 per cent of the population, with the great majority of workers in the agricultural and informal sectors not being covered by any organized social protection. Over the past two or three years, public attention has therefore shifted towards the role that can be played

A survey of **mutual health schemes** in *Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal* and *Togo* found a total of 59 active schemes, including:

- nine schemes in *Benin* covering some 7,500 beneficiaries;
- three schemes in *Burkina Faso* covering 17,000 beneficiaries (of which only 2,000, however, benefit from effective health insurance);
- ten schemes in *Cameroon* with 11,000 beneficiaries;
- one functional society in *Mali* with 10,000 beneficiaries;
- 24 schemes in *Senegal* with 32,000 beneficiaries; and
- nine schemes in *Togo* covering 20,000 beneficiaries.

The findings of the survey will be published in 1998.

With the exception of Senegal, where mutual health schemes first became operational about ten years ago, the development of these group health insurance schemes in most of the countries surveyed coincided with the launching of the ACOPAM support activities. The benefits provided by the schemes vary and, in addition to health care, may include the transportation of sick persons, expenditure on family events such as marriages and baptisms, old-age pensions and death benefits, including the payment of funeral expenses. Demand for ACOPAM support in this field has been extending to other regions of Africa and, outside Africa, to countries such as Haiti.

by mutual health schemes. Governments in several countries in the region have started to orient their policy towards mechanisms through which groups of the population can organize their own health coverage. A ministerial programme has been created for this purpose in Senegal, while legislation has been adopted in Mali on mutual health schemes. The ILO took the lead, through its ACOPAM programme (see Chapter 2), in providing guidance and training to strengthen existing mutual schemes and assist in the creation of others. A subregional workshop was organized to train instructors, who then carried out training activities in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal. Assistance was provided in the development of information brochures responding to the needs of the different countries and a training manual was produced.[1] Trade union organizations were also supported in their efforts to create mutual health schemes, particularly in Burkina Faso and Togo, where they played an important role in the creation of occupational schemes, especially in the informal sector.

An important function of the African Regional Office is the dissemination of information on the work and principles of the ILO to constituents throughout the region. This function is fulfilled in a number of ways. These include the publication of a regular regional bulletin and the provision of access to the databases of the African Labour Information System (ALIS), which contain socio-economic data on African countries, as well as information on ILO technical cooperation, advisory and training activities in the region. The Regional Office also facilitates the exchange of information between the countries of the region in technical fields, such as the promotion of enterprises and cooperatives. In this way, for example, many countries which do not benefit directly from the services of the ACOPAM programme for the development of cooperative enterprises are able to gain access to the assistance of ACOPAM experts and use the programme's documentation and training materials to consolidate their own cooperative movements. The Regional Office has also been active in promoting the adaptation of the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training materials to French-speaking countries and in supporting the establishment of credit facilities for small enterprises, for example in collaboration with the Central Bank of West African States.

East Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

Although the countries of East Africa have different geographical and cultural characteristics, they tend to be confronted with similar problems of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, which affect a majority of their populations, and particularly women and children. These problems have been magnified by the long-term economic crisis experienced by the continent, as well as by structural adjustment, the high rate of demographic growth, the low employment creation potential of the private sector and an evident mismatch between the demand and supply of skills. Few workers benefit from social protection of any sort and many people work in conditions which endanger their health and safety. Certain countries in the subregion are affected by or emerging from conflict. The effectiveness of social dialogue and tripartite institutions varies widely in the subregion. However, in all cases, respect for fundamental work-related rights needs to be consolidated and the participation of the social partners in decision-making strengthened.

Located in Addis Ababa and composed of ten advisers, the East Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team covers Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. Country objectives have been finalized for Eritrea, Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, and are nearing completion for Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles. The effectiveness of the team's work has depended in large part on the political environment and stability of each member State and has been hampered in recent years by the violent conflicts which have broken out in certain countries of the subregion. The location of the team in Addis Ababa has meant that it has maintained close contacts with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and particularly its Labour and Social Affairs Commission, as well as with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

The employment policies pursued by the countries of the subregion have not responded adequately to the grave problems of unemployment and underemployment with which they are confronted. To provide guidance in this respect, the ILO organized seminars on employment policy in Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda for high-level officials, employers' and workers' organizations, as well as the national and international organizations concerned. These seminars led up to the formulation of employment policy documents, which are currently under examination by the respective Governments with a view to their adoption and implementation.[2]

The principal orientations of the **employment policy documents** formulated in close consultation with the ILO's constituents for *Kenya, Nigeria* and *Uganda* include:

- the promotion of more rapid growth of productive employment in all sectors;
- the achievement of more employment-intensive growth through a more appropriate macro policy environment and support for employment-intensive and labour absorbing sectors (especially agriculture and micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises);
- the linking of education and training to employment;
- the mainstreaming of vulnerable groups and the improvement of working conditions and the environment;
- strengthened institutional coordination for employment promotion; and
- the improved monitoring of employment and labour market developments.

In Kenya, the Government has adopted the main recommendations of the document and has included some of them in its national development plans. Preliminary reactions to the document in Nigeria suggest it has been received favourably and a national workshop on the subject is planned during the course of 1998. The draft policy has been widely accepted in Uganda and many of its recommendations implemented.

The basis for the formulation of employment policy was also strengthened through the provision of assistance in the field of labour statistics. Programmes of labour statistics were launched in Eritrea and Uganda, national classifications of occupations were established or updated in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda and a survey of the informal sector was carried out in Ethiopia.

Representatives of the governments and social partners in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda also took part in national seminars organized by the ILO to identify measures to improve the national vocational training systems. In Ethiopia, the Government has accepted the policy recommendations made by the seminar and has commenced a process of social dialogue for their implementation. In Kenya, the recommendations of the seminar have been adopted in several policy documents, such as the Education Master Plan and the Industrialization Plan. Technical cooperation activities were commenced during the biennium to implement a community-based training programme in three poor districts of the country. After accepting the policy proposals set out in a report on development and employment generation, the Government of the Seychelles sought ILO assistance in the formulation of vocational education and training policy strategies.[3] The Government of Mauritius published the recommendations of a seminar on education, training and the world of work and is in the process of reorganizing the national vocational education and training system. Workshops conducted with ILO assistance in Uganda have led to the inclusion of plans in the current public investment programme to introduce an industrial training levy fund and develop community-based training for employment and poverty alleviation in rural areas.

In recognition of the importance of the private sector in promoting economic development and creating good quality employment, several countries in the subregion have adopted global enterprise development strategies based on the promotion of a conducive administrative and regulatory environment and on the strengthening of training capacity for micro- and small enterprises. ILO training materials for small enterprises were introduced in Ethiopia. Assistance was provided to Djibouti for the development of a national strategy for the introduction of entrepreneurship skills in secondary and vocational education. The ILO provided support for the strengthening of the Uganda Management Training and Advisory Centre and the establishment in the Seychelles of a Small Enterprise Development and Promotion Agency and a productivity centre. Technical cooperation activities in this field concentrated on several countries, including the United Republic of Tanzania and Kenya, where a project was launched to develop small enterprises in three pilot districts. A multidisciplinary approach to assistance in this respect, involving several United Nations agencies, was pursued in Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. With a view to assisting conflict-affected countries in the subregion, studies were carried out on the situation of the various conflict-affected

An analysis carried out in 1996 of **labour-based programmes** in *Madagascar* found that they:

- create between two and five times more employment than equipment-based approaches;
- cost some 30 per cent less in financial terms; and
- reduce the foreign exchange cost by about 30 per cent.

The 3.5 million workdays created in 1995 through labour-based infrastructure programmes, equivalent to over 13,000 full-time jobs, corresponds to 30 per cent of the non-agricultural employment generated every year in the secondary and tertiary formal sector. In 1995, some $20 million of investment created around 35,000 additional jobs, two-thirds of them indirectly through the multiplier effect of the financial injection into the local economy.

groups in Ethiopia and Uganda as part of the action programme on conflict-affected countries.[4] The findings of the studies are expected to lead to the adoption of vocational training and entrepreneurship promotion programmes to assist in the social and economic reintegration of the groups concerned.

To promote employment and national development in the countries in the subregion, the ILO continued to support employment-intensive infrastructure projects in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. These included a road improvement project in the Tigray and South Wollo regions of Ethiopia and a component of a World Bank-funded social fund in Madagascar focusing on labour-intensive urban poverty alleviation. As the employment-intensive works have become institutionalized in several countries in the subregion, including Kenya and Uganda, where a Labour-Based Intensive Work Unit operates under the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the ILO has continued providing ongoing technical advice and support. It has also promoted training in labour-intensive techniques in several training institutions in the region (see Chapter 2).

The promotion of tripartism in the subregion requires the strengthening of organizations of employers and workers so that they can play their important role as pillars of social dialogue. The organizations of employers and workers in the countries covered by the team benefited from training activities and seminars on a range of subjects, including fundamental workers' rights, equality and gender issues, international labour standards and negotiating techniques. The assistance provided contributed to the reconstitution of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions, while technical assistance was provided to the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers in the drafting of its Statutes. Another significant result was the establishment of the Ethiopian Employers' Federation. Moreover, representatives of employers and workers in several countries in the subregion participated in tripartite seminars and workshops to raise awareness of occupational safety and health problems and identify concrete measures to improve safety and health at work. The impact of these activities was multiplied through the publication and dissemination of training manuals on occupational safety and health.

In response to the Director-General's campaign for the ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions, several of the countries covered by the team are studying the ratification of one or more of the Conventions concerned. Promotional activities were focused on establishing tripartite bodies, particularly in Kenya, Mauritius, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. A tripartite seminar on the fundamental Conventions was held in Uganda and a subregional tripartite meeting focusing on Conventions Nos. 100 and 111 was held for East African countries. A subregional tripartite seminar aimed at the ratification of Convention No. 87 was organized for Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, and Kenya is expected to ratify the Convention in 1998. Labour legislation in the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda is being revised to bring it into conformity with Convention No. 138, while a project was prepared to review the labour legislation in Djibouti. The revision of labour legislation in Djibouti and Eritrea provides a unique opportunity to bring it into conformity with fundamental ILO standards and pave the way for the ratification of the respective Conventions. As a promotional measure, Convention No. 87 has been translated into the national language of Eritrea, while preparations were made for the translation of an information package on fundamental ILO standards into Swahili and the Ethiopian national languages. In the

framework of the OAU Labour and Social Affairs Commission, African States which are members of the ILO Governing Body adopted a recommendation designed to encourage African States to ratify the ILO's fundamental Conventions.

Central and West Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The size, situation and economic potential of the countries of Central and West Africa vary widely. Their recent development has accentuated their disparities, with certain countries beginning to emerge from a long period of economic crisis and showing a certain dynamism, while others are involved in violent internal conflict. The majority of the population in these countries work in rural areas or the urban informal sector. In neither case are they covered by employment policy measures, labour administrations or representative organizations. Nor do they tend to benefit from any form of social protection. The differences in the levels of national development lead to substantial flows of labour migration between countries in Central and West Africa, while the violent conflicts which continued to occur during the biennium resulted in massive population movements. The democratization process, which has been gathering pace in recent years at the political level, has hardly begun to extend to social and labour matters. Social dialogue, where it exists, still admits little pluralism. Decentralization has as yet done little to embrace all the development partners.

The Central and West Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is composed of 14 advisers and is located in Abidjan. It covers Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Togo. Some 14 of these countries have embarked upon country objectives formulation exercises, which in the cases of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Ghana and Madagascar have resulted in a final document and a plan of action. With the support of the ILO, certain countries in the subregion, such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger and Togo, have formulated and are implementing active policies to promote employment and combat poverty, including programmes of employment-intensive investment, the promotion of small and micro-enterprises and cooperatives, and measures for disadvantaged groups.

An encouraging trend in Central and West African countries has consisted in the efforts made to establish or rehabilitate labour information systems as a basis for the development of labour policies and programmes. This trend is illustrated by the progressive establishment of employment and training "observatories" in such countries as Burkina Faso, Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon and Togo. Another change in outlook in these countries that can be attributed to ILO action is the progressively broader recognition being accorded to the link between investment options and the creation of employment. The ILO is therefore providing technical support for national public investment programmes in many countries, including the strengthening of capacities of local communities and the implementation of social funds in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali and Togo. Rather than isolated advisory services, there is a growing tendency for the ILO to be requested to provide more continuous support and follow-up for reforms and changes in systems, institutions and legislation. One illustration is the technical assistance provided in the amendment of legislation relating to cooperatives in the countries of the Sahel and in Congo to create a more conducive environment for the development of cooperative enterprises and associations.

The promotion of employment in the private sector continued to be supported by advisory services, training and technical cooperation activities focusing on employment-intensive programmes, microcredit systems, cooperatives, the informal sector and handicraft production. The French version of the Start and Improve Your Business training materials (*GERME — Gérez mieux votre entreprise*) was adapted and tested in Benin, Cameroon, Congo and Togo, and was introduced through the employers' organization in Burkina Faso. Support was provided in Côte d'Ivoire for the establishment of a federation of women entrepreneurs. A programme of support was also implemented for organizations representing micro-entrepreneurs in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

The young democracies in the subregion still bear the marks of the single-party system from which they have emerged. Pluralism is not yet widely accepted or practiced. The many conflicts which have occurred in the subregion are not unrelated to this problem, and make a return to social dialogue difficult. Advisory services and training activities were carried out in most of the countries of the subregion on the management and operation of trade union structures, industrial relations and collective bargaining, the functioning of bipartite and tripartite bodies and the role of the social partners in the reform of labour legislation. The participation of the social partners has been strengthened in many decentralized structures developed with ILO assistance, such as the management of cooperatives in the countries of the Sahel, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo, in local communities (for example in Côte d'Ivoire), in vocational training institutions (for example in Benin) and in the management of social protection schemes (see introduction to the region). In particular, as a result of a technical cooperation project carried out in the *Entente* countries, permanent tripartite dialogue bodies were set up and have started operating in Benin, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire (see Chapter 1 for further details). The same process has been launched in other countries in the subregion.

Other activities carried out to strengthen the application of the ILO's principles and values included technical cooperation projects and national and subregional tripartite training activities on international labour standards. During the biennium, Burkina Faso ratified Conventions Nos. 105 and 138 and Burundi ratified Conventions Nos. 98 and 138. Several other countries are considering the ratification of fundamental ILO Conventions, or have ini-

Important **legal and institutional measures** were adopted in several countries during the biennium in the field of occupational safety and health, including:

- the adoption in *Benin* of an administrative circular establishing safety and health committees;
- the revision in *Burkina Faso* of the Order respecting safety and health committees and the creation of a unit to investigate and study the working environment;
- the adoption in the *Central African Republic* of an Order setting up safety and health committees and the creation of an Inspectorate of Occupational Medicine;
- the introduction into the Labour Code in *Chad* of provisions giving effect to the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161), in relation to the health surveillance of the workplace and of workers, first aid and emergency care, a code of ethics and the protection of occupational health and safety professionals;
- the adoption in *Madagascar* of a code on occupational health and safety and the working environment;
- the creation in *Niger* of safety and health committees under the terms of the new Labour Code and the establishment of a General Inspectorate of Occupational Medicine;
- the establishment in *Senegal* of safety and health committees under the terms of a Presidential Decree; and
- the adoption in *Togo* of a circular setting up safety and health committees and the creation of an Occupational Safety and Health Unit in the Directorate of Labour.

tiated the procedures for their ratification. These include Benin (Convention No. 138), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Conventions Nos. 87, 105 and 138), Ghana (Convention No. 138), Rwanda (Convention No. 29) and Togo (Convention No. 105). Over ten ratifications of other ILO Conventions were also registered during the biennium for the countries covered by the team. National seminars in Benin, Rwanda and Togo also served to improve understanding of the ILO and its standards.

Occupational health and safety are still only of marginal concern to enterprises in the subregion. However, the assistance provided in this field, particularly in Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Mali and Niger, has borne fruit in the form of the introduction of safety and health modules and programmes in the training provided to doctors and nurses. Associations of safety and health professionals and occupational safety and health structures have been established or strengthened in eight countries, while the legislation has been revised to incorporate the principles contained in the relevant international labour standards, particularly in Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Madagascar. Burkina Faso ratified the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161), and the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), during the biennium. The ILO also endeavoured, wherever possible, to raise awareness of safety and health problems in the informal sector and to support initiatives taken, even though they are still isolated, to improve the situation in the sector.

North-West Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The countries covered by the North-West Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team lie in two areas with different economic, social and cultural characteristics. The countries of the Maghreb, situated on the Mediterranean coast, and particularly Morocco and Tunisia, are principally concerned to take advantage of the dynamism of the European Union. They benefit from a level of infrastructure, productive capacity and vocational training systems which do not exist in most of the other countries covered by the team. Several of these latter countries form part of the Sahel, where the climate is difficult and food security is an ever-present problem. The rest are located in more fertile coastal zones. Nevertheless, all these countries suffer to a greater or lesser extent from poverty, unemployment and precarious conditions of employment. In addition, some of them are ravaged by internal conflict, which finds in poverty fertile ground for antagonism and economic and social destabilization. The progress made in the democratization process by a number of these countries therefore remains fragile, against a background in which social dialogue generally needs establishing or consolidating.

The North-West Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is located in Dakar and is composed of seven advisers. It covers Algeria, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Tunisia. Country objectives have been finalized for Cape Verde, Guinea, Mali and Mauritania, while support has been provided for their formulation in Morocco and Tunisia. In the four countries for which country objectives have been finalized, as well as in Senegal, where an employment policy has been developed, a tripartite culture is gradually emerging. Moreover, most of the countries in the subregion are beginning to feel the need for permanent structures of tripartite dialogue. Modelled on the project undertaken in the *Entente* countries (see Chapter 1), two programmes were launched to create or strengthen tripartite structures,

one covering Guinea, Mali and Senegal, and the other the Portuguese-speaking countries in the subregion. These programmes have already given constituents in the countries concerned the opportunity to get to know each other better and engage in a process of consultation on economic and social issues.

The development of these structures has led to a significant change in the assistance requested from the ILO by employers' and workers' organizations. Strategic development plans have been formulated and implemented for employers' organizations in Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. In an increasing number of countries, employers' organizations, with ILO support, are taking initiatives to promote the creation and strengthening of enterprises. In Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, they are preparing to set up enterprise promotion centres. In the same countries, they are playing the leading role in the introduction of the Start and Improve Your Business training programme. Although much remains to be done, progress has therefore been made in several countries towards the objective of developing strong, independent and representative organizations of employers. This progress has been documented and disseminated in a publication on the experience of employers' organizations in North-West Africa.[5]

The process of developing country objectives has also been instrumental in helping workers' representatives in several countries to plan their interventions in the tripartite structures that are emerging and therefore to increase their influence and strengthen their participation in the formulation of economic and social policy. Advisory services were provided to reinforce and adapt trade union structures and training activities organized to strengthen their capacities in Cape Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. Opportunities for workers' representatives to influence enterprise policy in the field of safety and health have increased as a result of the establishment or reactivation of enterprise occupational safety and health committees in Guinea and Senegal. Workers' representatives were also involved in a discussion of the regulations respecting occupational safety and health in enterprises in a seminar organized in Cape Verde.

Employers' and workers' organizations also participated, alongside government services, in the discussion and formulation of employment policies in a number of countries in the subregion. With support from the ILO, these exercises resulted in employment and poverty issues being taken more fully into account in national development policies in the Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. The latter three countries reviewed their employment policies, and proposals for employment promotion programmes were formulated in Mauritania and Senegal. The same approach was adopted in the

Greater emphasis has been placed on **promoting employment and combating poverty** in the national development policies in:

- *the Gambia*, where the Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA) is based on a permanent national dialogue involving all sections of civil society, including local communities; the SPA includes a review of the impact of development strategies in fields such as health, agriculture and education on the poor and vulnerable, and gives priority to development projects to promote the creation of micro- and small enterprises by vulnerable groups; enhance food security by expanding access of women farmers to marketing channels, land and credit; and literacy campaigns, particularly for women and girls; and
- *Guinea*, where efforts to promote the transition to a market economy and democratization included the formulation of a document entitled *Guinea vision 2010*, setting out the main orientations for national economic and social development, which states that employment promotion is the greatest priority to combat poverty and achieve social development, particularly through a programme of sustainable human development.

Productivity improvement is one of the major goals of the strategy adopted in *Senegal*, as part of the national employment policy, to promote employment in the informal sector. A start has been made with the development of a national productivity programme and the creation of a National Production and Productivity Centre (CNPP). Representatives of the Government and the social partners, meeting in a national tripartite seminar on productivity promotion in December 1997, outlined the main principles of the productivity programme, including tripartism, better information and greater flexibility in the policies and structures regulating the business environment. Four main fields of action were identified:

- strengthening training by adapting it to the needs of micro-entrepreneurs;
- improved access to appropriate technologies through the development of a suitable information channel for micro-enterprises and assistance in the purchase of equipment;
- the improvement of working conditions, with particular emphasis on the situation of working children; and
- the extension of social protection to the informal sector.

five Portuguese-speaking African countries in the context of a subregional employment promotion programme. The tripartite constituents were also associated in the process of establishing an employment and training information system in Mali and the strengthening of existing systems in Mauritania and Senegal. A permanent system to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes on poverty was set up in the Gambia. Based on these experiences, a methodological guide on employment and training observatories was published and disseminated.[6]

In the framework of programmes to combat poverty, the Gambia and Cape Verde have formulated national strategies for the promotion of micro-enterprises. The Start and Improve Your Business training programme was adapted and introduced in Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. In the technical assistance provided for the promotion of enterprises and micro-enterprises, the approach adopted, as in the case of Senegal, was to facilitate the interaction between representatives of the public authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, training institutions and donors in order to develop common strategies for the improvement of enterprise productivity and competitivity.

In the technical support provided to constituents in Cape Verde, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal to update information on and analysis of the training situation, emphasis was placed on establishing a closer relationship between the skill needs of enterprises and training systems and programmes. This involves the inclusion of elements on enterprise culture and entrepreneurship in technical and vocational training programmes. It also means including in training structures more support for self-employment and the development of micro-enterprises through training in business skills and the provision of guidance on business opportunities. Feasibility studies were carried out in Mali and Senegal to facilitate the introduction of entrepreneurship training in technical and vocational training institutions.[7] A programme was also launched in Liberia, Mali and Sierra Leone for the economic and social reintegration of ex-combatants through training in new skills.

Important steps in securing greater respect for human rights were taken during the biennium with the ratification of Convention No. 105 by Mauritania and Convention No. 138 by Tunisia. In addition, a national tripartite seminar in the Gambia recommended the ratification of the ILO's seven fundamental Conventions. The importance of these standards was also emphasized in the process of formulating country objectives for several countries in the subregion, with particular reference to Convention No. 87 in the case of Morocco. Further progress in the application of Conventions will be achieved through the reform embarked

upon in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau with a view to making their national labour legislation more consistent with fundamental workers' rights, while preserving the economic efficiency of enterprises and their potential for job creation. Guinea has also begun the process of formulating a national occupational safety and health policy.

Southern Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The situation in southern Africa has improved rapidly over recent years. After long periods of conflict and war, several of the countries in the subregion are enjoying periods of stability and economic growth. Recent developments in the situation in Angola give grounds for hope that there will be a return to peace throughout the subregion. Nevertheless, peace remains fragile because of the proximity of new zones of conflict in the Great Lakes region and Central Africa. Progress is also being made in the field of economic integration, which has offered greater opportunities for trade, investment and economic development at the subregional level. Nevertheless, the countries in the subregion still face the double challenge of creating sufficient employment and combating poverty. Moreover, the basis for the formulation of the required policies is lacking, since information on employment and the labour market is generally unreliable and fragmentary. Against the background of globalization and regional economic integration, the labour market in the subregion is subject to far-reaching change, while the implementation of structural adjustment programmes throughout the decade has led to the rapid growth of informal activities and greater flexibility in the labour market.

The Director-General's campaign for the ratification of the seven fundamental ILO Conventions met with a very encouraging response from southern African countries, with the following ratifications being registered during the biennium:

- **forced labour**: *Convention No. 29*: Botswana and South Africa; *Convention No. 105*: Botswana and South Africa;
- **freedom of association**: *Convention No. 87*: Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia; *Convention No. 98*: Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia;
- **equality of opportunity and treatment**: *Convention No. 100*: Botswana; *Convention No. 111*: Botswana and South Africa; and
- **minimum age**: *Convention No. 138*: Botswana.

The Southern Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is composed of 11 advisers and is located in Harare. It covers Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Country objectives have been developed and the resulting action plans are in operation in seven of these countries and are in the process of being finalized for South Africa and Swaziland.

The objectives of ILO action in the subregion as regards international labour standards were an increase in the number of ratifications, better application of ratified Conventions and respect for the obligations contained in the ILO Constitution. An additional 25 ratifications of ILO Conventions were registered by the nine countries of the subregion during the biennium, of which 16 concerned the seven fundamental Conventions. The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations also noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in Namibia and Zambia in the application of the ILO's fundamental Conventions. With ILO assistance, significant progress has also been made in resolving the problems encountered in this regard in Swaziland. The countries in the subregion have also developed the capacity to fulfil their reporting obligations on

ILO standards. This progress is in large part due to the promotional, training and information activities carried out in all the countries covered by the team. These included the International Labour Standards Update programme, which was implemented in all the countries covered by the team and consists of a detailed tripartite briefing session once a year, supplemented by other components, such as technical briefings or training, as requested by constituents. The programme is designed to support the observance of national obligations deriving from the ILO Constitution and the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), which has been ratified by seven of the nine countries covered by the team.

Collective bargaining and tripartite consultation machinery is not, in general, sufficiently widespread or robust to provide a basis for effective and balanced industrial relations systems in the subregion. The advisory and training services provided by the ILO to government services and organizations of employers and workers were designed to strengthen their capacity to contribute to the establishment of permanent industrial relations and decision-making structures. The ILO assisted the Government of Zimbabwe in launching collective bargaining in the public sector, while advisory services in South Africa focused on the strengthening of collective bargaining in public sector organizations. Assistance was provided to constituents in Malawi and Swaziland for the development of an appropriate legislative framework for collective bargaining. A technical cooperation project was also carried out to strengthen dispute settlement machinery in South Africa (see Chapter 1) and was extended to other countries on a pilot basis in 1997. Another technical cooperation project was launched to strengthen tripartism and workplace democracy in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland.

With support from ILO training and advisory activities, several southern African countries, including Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, are making increasing use of tripartite means to achieve consensus in the economic and social decision-making process. The ILO's activities to promote this process culminated in the organization of a subregional tripartite workshop in Johannesburg in December 1997, at which the member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) examined the situation as regards tripartite consultation in their countries and made proposals to reform the institutional framework for social dialogue at the national level. In particular, the participants formally recognized the essential role of tripartite cooperation and consensus-building in socio-economic development.

Several member States received assistance during the course of the biennium to improve their knowledge of their labour markets. A survey of the labour force was carried out in Namibia. Assistance was provided for the analysis of the resulting data and the formulation of the chapters of the national plan relating to employment. Towards the end of the biennium, a detailed review was undertaken in Malawi of employment and growth perspectives in the principal sectors of the economy with a view to developing policies for the creation of productive employment. A subregional database of employment and labour statistics was also developed and will be made available to constituents in the subregion to improve their access to data and assist in their analysis of the labour market situation.

Analyses have shown that **labour-based road construction** costs in *Lesotho* and *Zimbabwe* are more than one-third lower than those of an equipment-based approach. At a time when formal sector employment is declining in Zimbabwe and rising slowly in Lesotho, potential employment from labour-based road construction is equivalent to 6 per cent of total formal sector employment in Zimbabwe and 18 per cent in Lesotho.

As a result of the support provided by the team and the ASIST programme (see Chapter 2 for an overview of ILO work in this field), employment-intensive programmes are now well-established throughout the subregion. Assistance continued to be provided in most countries for the restructuring of the government services responsible for developing infrastructure. With support from donors, infrastructure development has been decentralized. Many small enterprises have flourished in the conducive environment for their activities offered by these programmes. Many countries are now requesting specific training and advisory services for the planning and improvement of access roads in rural and urban areas in collaboration with local communities. These activities constitute important and substantive tools for decentralized planning and participative development.

Most of the governments in the subregion are also seeking to adopt strategies and policies to create an environment that is conducive to the development of the private sector, and particularly small enterprises, which currently suffer from difficulties in gaining access to capital and institutional support. Malawi, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland benefited from assistance in the formulation of policies and the implementation of programmes to promote small enterprises. Productivity centres or associations were created in Malawi and Zimbabwe, and supported in Botswana.

Southern African countries are facing great difficulties in reforming their training policies and systems in order to adapt them to changing economic and social needs and improve their effectiveness. Several countries have embarked upon a training reform process and have received assistance from the ILO for this purpose. By way of illustration, support was provided in Zimbabwe for a survey of the supply of and demand for skilled labour. Advisory services were provided to Zambia and a seminar was held in Lesotho on training policy. However, in most countries these reforms are encountering significant obstacles, including the reluctance of the State to allow the social partners and the private sector sufficient space to play their full role in the field of training.

The need to attract foreign investment has often led countries to adopt a less stringent attitude towards the application of occupational safety and health standards. However, SADC member States demonstrated their awareness of the need to remedy this situation and provide better protection for workers by initiating a process of harmonization of their respective regulations. With ILO support, this process led to the formulation of regional codes on chemical safety and HIV/AIDS.

Social security systems in the subregion only cover a small proportion of workers and the population. Support continued to be provided to

Codes of practice on chemical safety and HIV/AIDS were developed during the biennium by SADC member States.

- The draft code of practice on the safe use of chemicals, formulated by a tripartite technical committee in Swaziland in August 1997, sets out the roles and responsibilities of governments, employers, manufacturers and transporters, the roles and rights of workers and their representatives, and the cooperation to be achieved by all parties concerned for the safe use of chemicals in SADC member States. It has been circulated to member States for comments and should be endorsed early in 1998 before being submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.
- The draft code on HIV/AIDS and employment contains provisions covering ethical principles for all medical/health conditions in employment, education awareness and prevention programmes, job access, workplace testing and confidentiality, the management of illness and job security, occupational benefits, protection against victimization, grievances handling and the management of information. It is due to be approved by the Council of Ministers during the course of 1998.

governments and the social partners in their efforts to restructure social security schemes and adapt them to the most pressing needs of the population, while ensuring their compatibility with the reforms implemented to increase the competitiveness of the economy. Progress was achieved in a number of cases. In Zambia, for example, with ILO assistance, the Social Insurance Fund is being transformed into a fully-fledged social security system. In Namibia, support was provided to the newly established social security commission. In Botswana, a technical cooperation project established the conditions under which a social security system could operate and proposed general options for its structure. A study was also carried out to analyse the social protection of migrant workers in South Africa.[8]

North Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The North Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is located in Cairo and was composed of two advisers for most of the biennium. It covers Egypt and Sudan. The country objectives for Egypt were finalized during the biennium 1994-95.

The war that is ravaging the south of Sudan places a heavy burden upon the country as a whole. The national economy has suffered and opportunities for social dialogue have been minimized. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the Sudanese economy has laboured under the double handicap of a deterioration in its balance of payments and a high rate of inflation. The external debt exceeds the country's repayment capacity. Under these conditions, the employment situation and living conditions are extremely precarious. Although a process of economic reform and structural adjustment has been implemented in Egypt since the beginning of the 1990s, it is still too early to judge its impact on employment, poverty, the distribution of income and living conditions. Despite the privatization of public enterprises, the State still controls much of the national economy. The high rate of demographic growth is placing great pressure on the available land and constitutes a major challenge in terms of development and employment creation.

The assistance provided to Egypt during the biennium focused on the preparation of the new Labour Code, which has been submitted to the National Assembly. Both workers' representatives and labour inspectors were provided with training to strengthen their capacity for the dialogue and collective bargaining which will take place once the Labour Code has been adopted. Labour inspectors and other officials were also provided with training in both Egypt and Sudan to improve their capacity to monitor issues relating to occupational safety and

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Awareness in *Egypt* of the **child labour** problem has been rising in recent years, as it has received exposure through the mass media, including television. ILO-IPEC has been supporting activities in the country since 1994, leading up to:

- the creation of a Child Labour Unit in the Ministry of Manpower and Migration (MOMM) in 1995;
- the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between MOMM and ILO-IPEC in 1996 and the setting up of a National Steering Committee with a broad representative membership;
- the adoption of a new Child Law in 1996 which, among other provisions, prohibits employment before the age of 14, unless authorization is issued for employment at the age of 12 by the Provincial Governor in agreement with the Minister of Education;
- the holding of a series of meetings by the National Steering Committee to prepare a national plan of action on child labour; and
- a high-profile initiative in June 1997 by the First Lady, Mrs. Mubarak, in calling a high-level meeting to set in motion the formulation of a national strategy to address the priority issues of child labour, street children and juvenile delinquency.

health and working conditions. This work was supported by a study of the labour inspection system in Egypt. Other training activities concentrated on improving the application of international labour standards, particularly as regards minimum age and the maritime sector in Egypt and freedom of association in Sudan.

Arab States

Although there are considerable variations in their economic and social conditions, the countries in the region continued to attach considerable importance to modernizing their economies and strengthening their human resources. In response to changes in the structure of their economies and in skill requirements, the oil-producing countries accord high priority to the increased utilization of the national workforce. The other countries in the region are aiming to reduce unemployment and promote employment opportunities in the expanding sectors of their economies. In some countries of the region, awareness of the importance of balanced economic and social development is increasing because of the obvious difficulties arising in relation to policies which emphasise only economic development. In this context, the ILO was active in providing assistance to its tripartite constituents, particularly on such issues as workers' rights, international labour standards and labour law. ILO action in this respect made a considerable contribution to strengthening tripartism and the development of appropriate policies and programmes.

The Regional Office for Arab States and the Arab States Multidisciplinary Advisory Team continued to maintain close dialogue with ILO constituents during the biennium to identify their priorities and needs, particularly in the fields related to the Organization's three priority objectives of promoting democracy and human rights, alleviating poverty and unemployment, and the protection of working people. The Arab States Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is composed of nine advisers and is located in Beirut. It covers Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and the West Bank and Gaza. Country objectives have been finalized for five countries in the region. Both the Regional Office and the Multidisciplinary Advisory Team collaborated in several areas with the Arab Labour Organization (ALO), the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) and the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Gulf Cooperation Council States.

The development of the level of social dialogue that is essential in the region for the achievement of greater social stability continues to require consolidation of the relevant institutions and structures. Particular attention in this respect continued to be paid to strengthening the capacities of the social partners and adapting labour law to take into account the relevant international labour standards. The ILO promoted social dialogue by providing opportunities for the social partners to meet and discuss matters of mutual concern. These included the bipartite meetings organized in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, in which government representatives were invited to participate. Both meetings examined several issues, including occupational safety and health, conditions of work and productivity, and offered an opportunity for the Office to provide constituents with technical advice on these subjects. The experience gained in these activities points to the need for an improved understanding by constituents of issues that are of critical importance for tripartism, including industrial relations, collective bargaining and freedom of association.

Employers' organizations in the region are endeavouring to expand their role so that they can contribute more effectively to the social and economic development of national society. The training activities and advisory services provided in most of the countries of the region concentrated on strengthening the capacity of employers' representatives and improving the climate for enterprise development, with emphasis on the establishment of new private businesses. Some 200 young entrepreneurs in Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen benefited from training workshops on how to start a business. Assistance was provided to the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza for the formulation of a new constitution, which was submitted to the central Palestinian authorities for approval. An industrial survey was also carried out and the first business directory published in the territories.

Workers in most of the countries of the region continued their efforts to establish independent organizations capable of defending their rights and playing a significant role in economic and social development and the democratization process. Advisory services were provided, training organized and information materials translated into Arabic covering a wide range of issues, including collective bargaining, social dialogue, human resources development and the role that trade unions can play to address the economic and social difficulties arising out of economic restructuring, globalization, privatization and the liberalization of trade. Over 150 workers' representatives in the West Bank and Gaza were trained in trade union issues, workers' education and collective bargaining. A project was launched in the West Bank and Gaza to improve the capacity of trade unions to participate in the design, implementation and evaluation of vocational training policy. A project was also developed to strengthen trade union capacities in Lebanon in the areas of the management of workers' organizations and collective bargaining.

In the field of international labour standards, the assistance provided during the biennium concentrated on promoting the ratification and observance of the ILO's fundamental Conventions and increasing awareness of the role of international labour standards in general. Some progress was achieved in the Director-General's campaign for the more widespread ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions when the United Arab Emirates ratified Conventions Nos. 100 and 105 in 1997, while the ratification process has been initiated by Oman for Convention No. 29 and by Kuwait for Convention No. 138. Eight of the 11 member States in the region have now ratified at least four of the fundamental Conventions. Technical advice was also provided to assist constituents in complying with their reporting obligations under the terms of the ILO Constitution. Assistance in the field of labour legislation focused on integrating the provisions of international labour standards into national law.

The situation of women in the labour market varies between the different member States in the region. However, women who wish to work tend

In September 1996, in collaboration with the Jordanian National Committee for Women, the ILO organized an Arab Ministerial Conference for the Preparation of a Unified Arab Programme and Mechanism to follow up the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Ministerial Conference was held at two levels: the first involving representatives of ministries, experts and officials concerned with women's issues, and the second for Arab NGOs.

Following this Conference, Jordan, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza set up commissions to follow up the Beijing Conference and integrate women's needs into the national planning process and into human resources development activities.

Initiatives for the development of **action to combat child labour** in the region included:

- the establishment in *Jordan* of a National Steering Committee and the preparation of a national conference on the subject, with a view to the formulation of a national policy strategy on child labour in 1998;
- the organization in *Lebanon* of a National Conference on Child Labour in November 1997;
- the creation, in the *Syrian Arab Republic*, by the Ministry of Labour and other concerned ministries, as well as NGOs, of a committee to develop a national report on child labour; and
- the holding of a National Conference on Child Labour in October 1997 in *Yemen*, as a result of which an interim steering committee has drawn up a national policy and strategy for child labour in the country.

to encounter attitudinal obstacles. The traditionally low women's labour force participation rates are due in large part to the lack of vocational training opportunities for women and their exclusion from the development process. The approaches adopted to overcoming these problems consisted of raising awareness of the need for equality of opportunity and treatment for women in employment and occupation, assistance to constituents to ensure the participation of women in the national development process, and increasing women's awareness of their own rights through training activities. Technical assistance was provided to Jordan, Oman, Qatar and Yemen for the formulation of policies and action programmes to promote women's employment. A subregional workshop on the promotion of entrepreneurship by women was held in Jordan in November 1997 and a training kit on women workers' rights was translated into Arabic. Support was also provided for the formulation of a national action plan for women's employment in the West Bank and Gaza. Close contacts were maintained in this respect with the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) and AGFUND.

Child labour occurs in the region in a variety of forms and situations. In general, the work of children in the family or as apprentices is not considered to be hazardous or recognized as a problem by society. However, there has been a growing understanding that child labour could become a threat to the future development of many Arab developing countries and it is therefore starting to become a major concern. At the request of several governments, ILO-IPEC initiated activities on the problem of child labour in early 1997. Surveys of the national child labour situation were carried out in 1997 in Jordan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and in the West Bank and Gaza. An advisory mission was also undertaken towards the end of the biennium to develop a joint project between the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD) and ILO-IPEC.

ILO assistance to strengthen labour administrations in the region addressed structural weaknesses and staffing problems, particularly through the reinforcement of institutional capacities. Special efforts were made to improve the efficiency of labour administrations in Jordan, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza. The assistance provided in the West Bank and Gaza resulted in strengthened capacity, in terms of both facilities and expertise, in the fields of labour inspection, employment services, safety and health and vocational rehabilitation. The provision of equipment and training materials to the Ministry and to pilot employment offices contributed to the development of a department of labour for the Palestinian Authority. An action plan was also implemented in collaboration with the Regional Arab Programme for Labour Administration (RAPLA) to develop the capacities of labour administration officials in the region. In Jordan and Lebanon, the ILO assisted the national authorities in the establishment of employment offices, which are now in operation. The assistance provided to the United

Arab Emirates included a review of national labour legislation to identify areas in which revision is required to take into account the provisions of Conventions Nos. 100 and 105, which have been recently ratified by the country.

The principal problems in the region in relation to employment promotion and poverty alleviation continued to be the massive rates of unemployment of youth and women. Efforts were made to create a favourable policy environment for the promotion of employment and to increase the efficiency and mobility of the labour force so that workers can take full advantage of existing employment opportunities. A new generation of assistance projects was launched during the biennium to support the adoption of employment and labour market policies which can help overcome the very high rates of unemployment. The projects in Bahrain, Lebanon, Qatar and Yemen were launched during the biennium, while preparations were made for those in Jordan, Kuwait and the Syrian Arab Republic. A labour market information programme was commenced in Bahrain, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen in response to the need for the continuous collection and analysis of labour market information, particularly in areas such as labour migration, women workers, the informal sector and child labour. With support from the ILO, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) finalized the design of a long-term programme for its labour statistics department and successfully conducted three rounds of its labour force survey. Labour force surveys were carried out for the first time in a number of years in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The priorities of ILO assistance in the field of vocational training and skill development were improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness of training systems; broader involvement of employers' and workers' organizations; and the promotion of enterprise-based training. Support was provided to Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to evaluate the responsiveness of national training systems to actual labour market needs and to improve their performance through the incorporation of greater flexibility into training methods and delivery systems. A regional seminar on vocational training and curriculum development was held in 1997 in collaboration with the ALO on the adaptation of training systems to the changing needs of the labour market.

Despite the growth in the number of persons with disabilities in the region, as a result of wars and internal conflicts, vocational rehabilitation systems are still of limited coverage. The objective of ILO assistance was to improve the technical skills of current staff and to introduce new rehabilitation methodologies. Technical assistance projects were undertaken and national and regional training seminars were organized in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen and the West Bank and Gaza. These activities resulted in the incorporation of community-based rehabilitation strategies into the national policies in several countries, as well as upgrading the skills of a substantial number of practitioners in each country. In Yemen, two vocational rehabilitation centres were reactivated to cater for over 200 persons with disabilities. Four community-based rehabilitation projects were launched in the same country to serve over 300 persons with disabilities. More than 150 practitioners from various countries in the region received basic training on vocational rehabilitation, while 27 officials and policy-makers benefited from special training on policy development in the field of rehabilitation. A project undertaken in the West Bank and Gaza is designed to achieve the rehabilitation and reintegration of some 6,000 ex-detainees through the provision of business training and loans for the creation of income-generating activities. Another project promotes the production of low-cost wheelchairs by persons with disabilities.

The Americas

As democracy has become more firmly established in the Americas, political stability in the region has greatly improved. Against this background, the progress that has been made in many countries in establishing and strengthening social dialogue and tripartite consultation at the national and local levels is an essential factor in fostering peace and democracy, especially in countries emerging from conflict. The environment has therefore been propitious for the implementation of the active partnership policy, and there has been a major increase in the ILO's contacts with constituents, who have participated effectively in the development of country objectives. Social dialogue has also been reinforced at the regional and subregional levels, particularly in the context of the multiple subregional integration processes, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the common market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which have continued throughout the region.

Although the region experienced economic growth during the biennium, the quality of jobs deteriorated, informal employment surged and unemployment rates hit their highest levels of the past ten years. Women and young persons have been particularly badly affected. In this situation, with a view to improving their competitive performance, member States have been seeking to introduce labour reforms to improve the functioning of their economies. The ILO's approach in this respect has been to orient labour reform towards the reduction of selected labour costs, without impairing conditions of employment or obstructing collective bargaining. To provide guidance in this connection, a number of studies were carried out at the regional level on growth with employment and the impact of labour costs on competitiveness and worker protection.[9] With a view to improving the capacity of member States in the region to monitor the performance of their economies at all times and develop effective means of combating unemployment, an information network was created during the biennium. With the assistance of the social partners, national institutions and bureaux of statistics, the constitution of the information network made it possible to provide periodic information on labour market variables reflecting the situation in each country as regards growth, employment and labour standards. This information was provided to member States, among other means, through the *Labour overview*.[10]

During the biennium, child labour became a key issue on the national agendas of many countries in the region. The problem was also given high priority at the Tripartite Latin American Meeting at Ministerial Level on the Elimination of Child Labour, held in Cartagena de Indias in May 1997, as

One of the features of **action against child labour** in Latin America has been the very active role played by trade unions in changing social attitudes to the subject. Under the guidance of the Ibero-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), the Latin American Central of Workers (CLAT) and ILO-IPEC, trade union representatives formulated a landmark document on trade union action against child labour. National trade union meetings have since been held in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Venezuela.

In Central America, the trade unions in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama have hosted national seminars to sensitize trade unionists to child labour issues. In Costa Rica and Nicaragua, national plans of action on child labour for trade unions were developed, and in Costa Rica a Trade Union National Committee on Child Labour was established. A subregional meeting will be organized in 1998 to establish common policies and programmes on the elimination of child labour.

well as at the Summit of the First Ladies of America, held in Panama in October 1997. Latin America has the largest number of ILO-IPEC participating countries of any region. The following countries have signed Memoranda of Agreement (MOUs) with the ILO-IPEC programme: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela. ILO-IPEC is also active in Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay. As the number of ILO-IPEC participating countries in the region has increased, exchanges of experience on successful approaches and strategies against child labour, as well as networking between the various actors concerned, have been pursued at the regional and subregional levels. ILO-IPEC's regional and subregional activities during the biennium focused on action against the most intolerable forms of child labour. Project proposals on trafficking in children and child prostitution were formulated in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Paraguay.

Andean Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The countries of the Andean subregion are all undergoing a process of reform and structural adjustment. However, the initial phases of the process have tended to destroy more jobs than they have created, especially in the formal sector of the economy, with the result that informality has increased. Several countries in the subregion have also, during the biennium, experienced political instability and conflict of varying origins and types. Against this background, despite the relative weakness of the social partners in the five countries concerned, there is growing recognition of the fact that the process of reform requires the active participation of civil society to negotiate many of the proposed changes and that the social partners need to be strengthened so that they can play a more dynamic role in society. There is therefore significant consensus among ILO constituents in the five countries to the effect that the ILO needs to give priority to strengthening social dialogue and the creation of good quality and productive employment.

With eight advisers, the Andean Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is located in Lima and covers Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. Country objectives have been completed for all five countries in close collaboration with the respective governments and the social partners. The implementation of the agreed programmes resulted in greater interaction between the ILO and its constituents, and among constituents. In Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela the process has contributed to a significant increase in tripartite activities at the national level.

The strengthening of the social partners so that they can play a more proactive role in the nascent processes of social dialogue in the subregion

Social dialogue in the countries of the subregion developed during the biennium through the establishment and strengthening of several tripartite bodies:

- in *Colombia* the Government-led process of tripartite dialogue on wages, prices and productivity and on the modernization of industrial relations focused on the regular meetings of the new National Tripartite Council and its special committees; although it was interrupted at the beginning of 1997, the formal process of tripartite dialogue had resumed by the end of the biennium;
- in *Ecuador*, the main priority identified in the country objectives was technical support for the newly established Tripartite Concertation Committee and its five operational commissions; and
- in *Venezuela* the Tripartite Labour Committee was established early in 1997, with its first agreements covering changes in compensation benefits for dismissal and the reform of the social security system.

included the establishment of teams of trainers in the field of workers' education. A subregional tripartite seminar on workers' training and retraining, held in Lima in October 1996, was attended by Ministers of Labour from the subregion and high-level officials from employers' and workers' organizations. The participants adopted a tripartite declaration setting out guidelines for workers' training and retraining, which are currently being implemented in the subregion. One of the main recommendations made in the declaration is that changes and reforms to training systems should be agreed upon in a process of tripartite consultation. Five national seminars and one regional seminar were also held for employers' organizations on labour policies in the context of regional economic integration. A diagnosis of the structure and organization of employers' organizations in the subregion was carried out as a basis for advisory work to strengthen their performance[11] and manuals on social responsibility were developed in collaboration with employers' organizations in Colombia and Peru.[12]

Although all five countries in the subregion have ratified six of the ILO's seven fundamental Conventions, special attention was paid in the process of preparing and implementing country objectives to the application of ratified Conventions, based on the comments of the Committee of Experts. During the biennium, Bolivia ratified Convention No. 138. Colombia is also about to ratify Convention No. 138 and an analysis is being carried out in Peru of the possibility of amending the national legislation with a view to ratifying the Convention. Technical assistance in the field of international labour standards included the organization of a national seminar in Colombia for the highest magistrates of the judiciary to promote acceptance of and compliance with ILO standards. Technical support was provided for congressional labour committees in Venezuela and Peru. An informal report was prepared for the Peruvian Congress on five Bills introducing reforms in labour relations and collective bargaining which address matters raised by the Committee of Experts.

In the framework of the assistance provided to member States for the promotion of employment, five national studies were undertaken to analyse the employment situation and policy alternatives for the acceleration of employment growth.[13] These studies served as a basis for tripartite dialogue on employment policy. Assistance was also provided for the development of updated and comparable statistics of employment and unemployment based on household surveys in Bolivia, Peru and Venezuela. In the same countries, specially designed software was installed for employment services. For the first time in Bolivia, a survey was carried out to measure the expected demand for skilled workers by occupation, sector and enterprise size with a view to highlighting the skill requirements of enterprises

ILO assistance for the **promotion of employment** contributed to:

- the establishment of a retraining programme for workers in six public enterprises due for privatization in *Bolivia*;
- the development of some 70 local labour commissions in *Colombia* to identify employment problems at the local and provincial levels and link them with national employment programmes, although increased guerrilla activity and armed violence prevented the creation of commissions in other districts;
- the implementation of a pilot programme in *Peru* leading up to an employment and training programme for some 160,000 young persons from poor households in urban areas; the programme is based on local units, which identify skill requirements with employers, with the young persons earning a stipend during the training period and the minimum wage during in-enterprise training; and
- the reformulation and implementation of a similar programme in *Venezuela*, which is being run by the Ministry for Youth and is designed to benefit some 250,000 young persons from poor households.

Activities to promote **small and micro-enterprises** resulted in:

- the training of some 150 municipal officials in several areas of *Peru* in the development of micro-enterprises;
- the implementation of an employment programme for women from poor households in *Peru*, through which support in the form of food credits will be provided for micro-enterprises managed by women producing for markets with identified potential in urban and rural areas: the targets of the programme are the creation of 16,000 jobs in the first year and 100,000 over a six-year period; and
- the formulation of a programme to develop micro-enterprises specializing in road maintenance in *Venezuela*, which has been converted into a programme covering the whole country.

in urban areas.[14] The results of the survey have been used to adapt national training programmes. An inter-institutional committee on employment policy was also set up in the country, for which a number of reports were undertaken to analyse employment and labour market policies.[15]

Support for the creation of employment also continued to include assistance in the development of small and micro-enterprises. Start Your Business training materials were translated into Spanish and adapted for use in Peru, where some 40 instructors were trained in the use of the materials. As a follow-up to the interdepartmental project on the informal sector carried out in the biennium 1994-95, an analysis of the urban informal sector in Bogotá was produced in collaboration with over 30 national institutions, including government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations and informal sector organizations.[16] ILO assistance has been requested to support the implementation of the proposed policies in Bogotá, as well as to carry out a similar exercise in other cities in Colombia. In Peru, a review was undertaken of the various policies adopted in relation to micro-enterprises in order to promote better coordination and avoid duplication. The support offered in Venezuela to coordinate the work of the various public sector institutions assisting small and micro-enterprises resulted in the establishment of a coordinating committee in which the ILO participates.

Bolivia, Peru and Colombia have ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169). Technical assistance to promote the ratification of the Convention was also provided during the biennium to the Secretary-General for Indigenous Affairs of Ecuador. The question of ratification of the Convention is due to be raised by the National Constitutional Assembly, which met towards the end of the biennium and will conclude its work in 1998. In Bolivia, amendments were adopted to the law giving effect to Convention No. 169. Training materials were developed and over 30 legal advisers to indigenous peoples' organizations were trained. Many of the 301 municipalities created in the country by the administrative decentralization law of 1995 have indigenous mayors. At the request of organizations of indigenous peoples and the Government of Colombia, technical support was also provided to the permanent committee on concertation with indigenous peoples. An analysis was undertaken of the situation of indigenous peoples and sustainable development in the Amazon area of Peru. Proposals for action were set out in a synthesis report, which was reviewed by a workshop in July 1997 attended by government authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, and representatives of oil companies, NGOs and research centres. The participants at the workshop concluded that legal security for indigenous peoples needs to be extended throughout the country, that access to basic needs and services is still a priority issue for indigenous peoples and that an agreement should be reached between these peoples and oil companies to avoid the negative effects of oil extraction operations on sustainable development at the local level.[17]

The context in which assistance was provided in the field of social security continued to be the reform process of social security institutions under way throughout the region. In Venezuela, at the request of the Government and the Tripartite Labour Committee, which has adopted as its objective the establishment of a mixed public/private social security system, technical assistance concentrated on the legal framework and substantive issues in the reform process. The Bill developed by the Tripartite Committee has been submitted to Congress. The assistance provided in Colombia consisted of a financial and actuarial evaluation of the funds managed by the Social Security Institute of Colombia.

Central American Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The Central American Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is composed of nine advisers and is located in San José. It covers Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. During the biennium, the team's work was guided by the country objectives developed in the previous biennium for the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mexico, as well as the subregional objectives established for Central America, which cover Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. National programmes were also defined for Cuba and Haiti. A process of revision of country and regional objectives was undertaken during the biennium. The principal priorities identified by constituents in these exercises continued to be the alleviation of poverty, the protection of workers, support for employers' and workers' organizations and the promotion of tripartism and international labour standards.

The level of ratification of the seven fundamental ILO Conventions by the countries covered by the team is high, with Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua having ratified all seven of them, and the Dominican Republic and Haiti having ratified six. The ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions continued to be actively promoted during the biennium through the provision of technical assistance and the organization of seminars and workshops for the tripartite constituents. Study tours to Mexico, San José and Geneva were organized for Cuban legal experts so that they could examine different systems of labour legislation as a contribution to the process of the re-examination of labour legislation in Cuba in the light of the new developments in its labour market (see box). Workshops were held in various countries for the officials in the Ministries of Labour who are responsible for matters relating to international labour standards. Tripartite seminars and training were organized for constituents in preparation for the International Labour Conference and on a number of standards-related topics, including the use of ILOLEX and NATLEX, which can be accessed through the team's Web site (http://www.oit.or.cr).

Progress in relation to the **ratification and application of international labour standards** in the subregion has included:

- the adoption in *Costa Rica* of amendments to the Labour Code and Constitution to bring them into conformity with Convention No. 87;
- the ratification by *Cuba* of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159);
- the ratification by *El Salvador* of Conventions Nos. 29, 111 and 138 since the beginning of the Director-General's campaign for the more widespread ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions; and
- the preparation by the Government of *El Salvador*, with technical assistance from the Office, of 23 legal studies for the submission to the Legislative Assembly of instruments adopted by the Conference.

The **profound changes experienced by the Cuban economy** following the collapse of the Soviet bloc have resulted in far-reaching changes on the labour market. From a situation in which the State was the only employer, the private sector has been developing, together with a rise in self-employment and family micro-enterprises, which now account for some 12 per cent of the workforce.

A project was carried out to help the ILO's Cuban constituents gain a better understanding of the emerging labour market and establish a basis for cooperation with the ILO in the years to come. A number of activities were undertaken to assess the current situation and outline policy options in such fields as training, employment services, labour market information and productivity. The project led up to the formulation of a proposal for the establishment of a human resources development system and a framework document for future cooperation with Cuba in the fields of employment promotion and redeployment of the workforce.

The focal point of the ILO's efforts to consolidate peace and democracy in the subregion was the signature of the agreement on the definitive ceasefire in Guatemala in December 1996. The ILO provided assistance throughout the peace process, as it had leading up to the conclusion in 1995 of the Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is largely based on Convention No. 169. To follow up this Agreement, information on the Convention was widely disseminated and awareness-raising activities undertaken among the ILO's tripartite constituents in the country and the staff of the United Nations mission (MINUGUA) responsible for monitoring the Guatemala agreements (see also Chapter 3).

The improvement of employment services was the subject of numerous workshops and seminars in the countries of the subregion. In the Dominican Republic technical support was provided to the Secretariat of Labour for the reorganization and modernization of the country's employment services. In the context of its collaboration with the bipartite Labour Foundation in Panama, which is composed of the principal organizations of employers and workers in the country, the ILO assisted in the establishment of an electronic labour exchange to improve the labour market services provided by the Foundation.

For the past twelve years, in collaboration with the International Organization of Employers (IOE) and its beneficiaries, the ILO has been running the **Latin American Institute for the Management of Employers' Organizations** (*Instituto Latinoamericano de Gerencia de Organizaciones Empresariales* — ILGO), which has trained over 400 senior staff from employers' organizations in 18 Latin American countries.

One six-day course is provided every year. In 1997, it was attended by 63 senior staff of employers' organizations who, in addition to courses on the ILO and IOE, were trained in negotiation techniques, leadership, lobbying, communications and the analysis of global economic trends.

ILGO remains a unique training institute for high-level employers' representatives which is recognized and supported by employers' organizations throughout Latin America.

The support provided to strengthen employers' organizations included an analysis of central employers' organizations in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, as well as a survey of nearly 1,500 employers to ascertain their views on the role that should be played by their organizations. Technical support was also provided so that employers' organizations in the subregion could analyse their own situation. All of these activities pointed to the need to improve the communications of employers' organizations, both with their own members and between countries. Six national seminars were therefore held on communications for employers' organizations and a Web site was created for each organization so that it can communicate over the Internet.

In addition to training and advisory services, ILO activities in support of workers' organizations included two technical cooperation projects.

An innovative project of **education for employment for poor rural workers** was implemented in the districts of Comayagua, Intibucá and La Paz in *Honduras* between 1990 and 1996. Under the title of POCET (*Proyecto de Educación para el Trabajo*), the project activities were then handed over to the national counterpart, the National Centre of Education for Work.

The object of the project was to develop and test a methodology of education for work for very poor rural workers who are illiterate or of a very low educational level, between the ages of 15 and 49, with special emphasis on training for women. The education provided consisted of basic literacy and numeracy skills, as well as vocational training adapted to the circumstances of the communities, with emphasis on the participation of women and on environmental issues. The 7,500 individual beneficiaries were assisted in the development of production or social projects, provided with credits and organized into productive enterprises. All of this took place within a context of strengthened community participation and planning through the formation and development of community organizations.

Under one of the projects, technical support was provided to trade union confederations for the preparation and dissemination of their proposals on economic and legal issues, as well as the establishment of a highly trained group of trade union technicians and trainers. Under the other project, support was provided to rural workers' organizations.

The ILO's activities to help the countries in the region combat poverty included an important project in Honduras. The project consisted of the provision of work-related education to very poor rural workers to improve their employment opportunities. The methodology adopted by the project was based on the observation that traditional vocational training programmes mainly benefit urban employees in large and medium-sized enterprises who have already acquired a certain educational level. In the field of vocational training, the objective of technical assistance and technical cooperation activities was to develop systems which respond more closely to the changing skill requirements of the labour market. Technical assistance was provided in the development of two institutions which have adopted approaches to vocational training that are innovative in the Latin American context. The first is the Vocational Training Institute of El Salvador (INSAFORP), which manages the country's vocational training system by entrusting the implementation of programmes to collaborating institutions that it has duly recognized. The second is the National Technological Institute of Nicaragua (INATEC), which unified the former systems of technical education and vocational training. In addition to further training for trainers in INATEC, the technical support provided led, for the first time in Latin America, to the development of curricula on the basis of modules of vocational skills.

One important focus of work in the subregion during the biennium concerned the social and labour aspects of export processing zones (EPZs) and their enterprises (*empresas maquiladoras*). These enterprises are currently the principal source of employment creation in most of the countries of the subregion, providing over 200,000 jobs in both Central America and Panama, over 180,000 in the Dominican Republic and more than 800,000 in Mexico. However, the image of EPZs in these countries tends to be associated with labour problems, including low wages, bad working conditions, non-observance of labour legislation, harsh supervision and anti-union discrimination. Conscious of their unfavourable image, Ministers of Labour in the countries covered by the team on several occasions requested the ILO to investigate and endeavour to develop an attitude on the part of those concerned that is in accordance with ILO principles and values. The findings of a number of research activities on the role of the social partners and the social and labour impact of EPZs in Central America and

the Dominican Republic were published and broadly disseminated among workers' representatives through a number of seminars on EPZs.[18] At the request of employers' organizations, a general investigation of EPZs was also carried out, the findings of which were submitted to a subregional meeting of employers from Central America and the Dominican Republic on EPZs, held in Guatemala in April 1997. The participants at the meeting adopted a Declaration in which they reaffirmed their commitment to respecting fundamental labour standards as set out by the ILO.[19] These activities led up to the holding of a tripartite subregional seminar on the subject in San José in November 1997.

The social security reform processes currently under way in many of the countries in the subregion, including the privatization of social security protection in El Salvador and Mexico, formed the context of the ILO's activities in this field. The assistance provided in this respect included a study on the modernization and reform of the social security system in Honduras. The ILO also led a team of experts in an actuarial evaluation of the Panamanian Social Security Fund. A study was prepared on the implementation of a new law in El Salvador, which establishes a new private pension scheme to replace the social security system. Support was also provided for the preparation of a Social Security Bill in the Dominican Republic, which was examined and adopted by the Tripartite Commission on Social Security Reform, appointed by the President of the Republic.

Southern Americas Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The Southern Americas Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, which is composed of ten advisers, is located in Santiago and covers Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Country objectives have been finalized for all five countries. An updated version of the country objectives for Chile was prepared in collaboration with the tripartite constituents. In all the areas of the team's work, emphasis was placed on developing and strengthening the involvement of the social partners, as well as building their capacity to fulfil their important role in social dialogue in a rapidly changing institutional and economic context. Priority was also given to the promotion of employment, the protection of vulnerable categories of workers and the promotion of equality of opportunity, particularly as part of the process of subregional integration within the framework of MERCOSUR.

Significant progress was made in strengthening tripartite processes in favour of equality of opportunity and treatment. Tripartite meetings on this subject were held in all the countries covered by the team, as well as a subregional meeting, backed up by the preparation of a publication on the role of trade unions in promoting equality of opportunity for women.[20] Advisory services were also provided to the social partners and meetings were organized to assist them in the adoption of policies on equality. In Brazil, the ILO's promotional and support activities helped raise the profile of equality issues on the national political agenda. The development of a training programme on equality in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour resulted in the reactivation of the Working Group on Discrimination (GTEDEO). The women's committees of the three principal central trade union organizations held their first joint working session, in which they agreed upon a harmonized strategy of collaboration on gender issues in collective bargaining and produced a report on the subject, which was submitted to the Trade Union Coordinating Council (CCSCS) of MERCOSUR in December 1997.

Training materials on gender issues were developed and tested in a series of workshops for constituents and ILO staff, including the staff of the Inter-American Research and Documentation Centre on Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) in Montevideo.

The central theme of assistance to employers' organizations was their adaptation to the new challenges of open economies. This was the principal subject of ILO collaboration in the Argentinian Industrial Conference in 1996 and in other seminars for employers' organizations in Uruguay and Brazil. The support provided to the National Confederation of Industry in Brazil included the organization of meetings for reflection on industrial relations systems, the role of employers' organizations in the 21st century and trends in social security. Various models for the organization and roles of employers' organizations were presented to Paraguayan employers in the First Employers' Conclave in Paraguay, held in collaboration with the ILO in May 1996. This and other assistance led up to the adoption by Paraguayan employers' representatives of a new agenda redefining the role of their organization in the years to come.

ILO support made an important contribution to the consolidation of tripartite dialogue in the context of the MERCOSUR subregional economic integration process. Conferences and reports were prepared on labour inspection, labour statistics, labour standards and conditions of work in support of the work of MERCOSUR Technical Subgroup 10, in which the representatives of governments, employers and workers examine labour and social issues. This work led up to the development of a project for long-term ILO support to the Subgroup. Continuous support was provided to the Ministries of Labour which presided over the Subgroup, namely those of Paraguay and Uruguay. ILO collaboration in this respect with the Ministry of Labour of Uruguay included developing a plan for the formulation of a MERCOSUR Social Charter. The ILO also helped the MERCOSUR Socioeconomic Advisory Forum, the principal members of which are employers' and workers' representatives, to draw up its statutes and programme. In addition to providing technical support to the Joint Parliamentary Commission, particularly on the issue of child labour, the ILO assisted the CCSCS through the organization of seminars for the definition of policies on various labour-related issues. Training activities for trade union leaders from CCSCS concentrated on gender issues, labour market information and the MERCOSUR Social Charter.

The Director-General's campaign for the more widespread ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions received support from MERCOSUR countries with the ratification of Convention No. 29 by Uruguay and Convention No. 138 by Argentina. A Bill was submitted to the Chilean Congress for the ratification of Conventions

The **employment policy review** carried out in Chile found that, despite the successful implementation of a process of economic reform and a good overall economic performance, which has led to substantial job growth and a reduction in absolute poverty, the distribution of income has hardly changed. This problem has been addressed mainly through changes in the minimum wage as part of a broad tripartite agreement. The practice of "labour-only subcontracting" has been increasing and has contributed to the creation of unstable jobs with low wages and levels of occupational health and safety.

The review was submitted to a seminar on growth, employment and sustainable livelihoods held in December 1996 for representatives of the Chilean authorities, employers' and workers' representatives, academics and NGOs, leading up to strengthened social dialogue in 1997 on the development of equitable labour institutions, measures to improve the quality of employment and the situation of women on the labour market. The country objectives for Chile have subsequently been modified in consultation with the ILO's constituents to take these issues into account.

Nos. 87 and 98. The subject of ratification of the fundamental Conventions has been included once again in the updated version of the country objectives for Chile. In the case of Brazil, the only fundamental ILO Conventions that have not been ratified are Conventions Nos. 87 and 138. However, a process of reforming the industrial relations system has been launched in the country and should reflect some of the principles set out in Convention No. 87.

Guidance to constituents on the achievement of the objective of full employment was provided through a subregional tripartite seminar, held in Rio de Janeiro in May 1997, on productive growth with the creation of more and better jobs. The seminar examined the opening up of the economies of the subregion and emphasized that full employment is an achievable objective. It stressed the need for continued efforts to improve the quality of employment and the importance of orienting the process of regional integration towards the creation of employment through effective social dialogue and, where appropriate, the development of new strategic alliances. In the new environment of increased regional integration, it is necessary to develop policies that are adapted to market mechanisms under the supervision of appropriate social institutions. An important achievement in the field of employment policy was the promotion of tripartite dialogue on this subject in Paraguay through the creation of the National Tripartite Council on Employment, Wages and Training Policy.

Assistance in the development of employment and labour market policies which reflect ILO principles and values also included the publication of a review of employment policy in Chile, carried out in the framework of the Task Force on Full Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods, set up by the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) as a follow-up to the Social Summit.[21] Another country employment policy review was carried out towards the end of the biennium for Brazil, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the social partners. The review analysed the performance of tripartite policy-making bodies and the reaction of ILO constituents to the rapid structural changes and heightened international competition. It also discussed policy options in response to the rapid loss of jobs in the industrial sector and the increase in precarious forms of employment. The findings of the review were examined at a tripartite seminar held in December 1997 and will form the basis of a document on public employment policy to be submitted to the Ministry of Labour.

With a view to improving the response of training systems to the new skill requirements of enterprises through social dialogue, the ILO helped establish a Bipartitite Local Vocational Training Council in the Argentinian city of Rosario. A legal text was drafted setting up the Council, which is based on the Canadian model of bipartite vocational training councils. A pilot project has been launched with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security for the establishment of six other local vocational training councils.

The most important achievement during the biennium in the field of **labour market information** was undoubtedly the development, in collaboration with the Argentinian Labour Ministry, of a labour information system for MERCOSUR. The labour information unit is now operational and is continuing to receive technical support from the ILO. A Web page has also been created on labour information for MERCOSUR to guide users towards the most suitable ILO and other sources of labour information.

One of the most significant labour market trends in the subregion has been the increase in the number of persons working in the informal sector. However, little information is available on the issue. Using data from household surveys, censuses and other available sources of information, a series

of surveys were carried out on the changing characteristics of employment over the past ten years, particularly as far as women are concerned. The surveys document the change in the composition of the workforce with the massive increase in women's employment, while at the same time showing the persistence of the segregation of work by gender. They also point to the rise in more precarious forms of employment, for both men and women, and identify vulnerable social categories. The surveys go on to show the need for further research to extend the diagnostic process as a basis for the development of policies to protect the most vulnerable categories of workers.

Studies were also carried out of the scope and characteristics of home work in the subregion as a follow-up to the adoption of the Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177).[22] The studies recall the difficulty of obtaining quantitative data on home work and of distinguishing between home work, as defined in the ILO Convention, and forms of self-employment based at home, including micro-enterprises. In addition to sectors in which home work is known to be concentrated, such as footwear and apparel, home work is emerging in other sectors, ranging from computers to metalwork. The studies found very different situations as regards the quality of the work involved and the social protection available. Follow-up activities are recommended to determine the extent to which cases of good-quality home work can serve as a model for other homeworkers.

Caribbean Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The Caribbean Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, which is composed of seven advisers, is located in Port-of-Spain and covers Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. In addition to those formulated in the previous biennium for Belize, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago, country objectives were completed for Jamaica. Progress was made in the formulation of country objectives for the Bahamas and Suriname. Discussions have also been held with the CARICOM authorities concerning the possibility of developing regional objectives in the biennium 1998-99 to supplement individual country objectives and link the assistance provided at the national level to issues of regional integration and overriding regional priorities.

The focus of activities to combat poverty in the Caribbean was the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication, held in Port-of-Spain in October-November 1996. The ILO organized the meeting in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and other organizations, and submitted papers on the promotion of productive employment for poverty eradication[23] and youth employment.[24] The major output of the meeting was the Directional Plan of Action on Poverty Eradication, which is designed to guide national authorities in the preparation of their own plans of

Since 1994, the ILO has been engaged in the development of a **Caribbean Labour Market Information Data Bank** with the aim of providing an operational and up-to-date source of information on key labour market issues. The Data Bank contains information on characteristics of the employed and unemployed, wages and incomes, industrial injuries, industrial disputes, collective agreements, employers' and workers' organizations, vocational training, work permits and social security. It currently covers some 20 countries and serves as the main source of information for an annual report on trends in a series of key labour market indicators, the first of which was issued during the biennium.

action against poverty. The ILO coordinated the section of the Directional Plan of Action addressing the issue of employment promotion. It was also involved in the implementation of several poverty eradication activities at the national level. In Jamaica, for example, it participated in an inter-agency mission to assist the Government in the preparation of its National Poverty Eradication Programme.

In relation to employment and labour market policies, emphasis continued to be placed on the development of labour market information systems. Technical advisory services were provided and training organized to assist in the revision of existing survey instruments in Barbados and Jamaica, and to establish new surveys in Guyana and Dominica. A workshop was organized in November 1996 on the development of a wage statistics programme for the Caribbean. Attended by 40 participants from all the ILO member States in the subregion, the workshop developed an outline for a national minimum programme for wages statistics for both current and longer-term statistics. The availability to constituents of reliable and comparable labour market information was improved during the biennium by the publication of the first issue of the *Digest of Caribbean labour statistics*, based on data from the Caribbean Labour Market Information Data Bank.[25]

An important initiative in the field of industrial relations was the organization of **two training courses for labour conciliators**. Designed for senior labour officers, the courses focused on techniques and skills of conciliation and attitudes and approaches to improve the performance of conciliators. An integral part of one of the courses was instruction on the arrangement of training courses, which enabled the conciliators to organize activities within their own departments and extend the benefits of the training to all the conciliators in the subregion.

In view of the strong movement towards regional integration and the need to promote labour mobility in a globalized economy, Caribbean countries realize that a subregional skills development and recognition strategy is needed. They therefore continued to work within the framework of the CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The Strategy identifies 11 priority areas for the development of technical and vocational education and training, including certification, accreditation and validation, and labour market information systems. The ILO collaborated with CARICOM in the holding of the regional adviser meeting on the strategy in Jamaica in 1996. Following the preparation by a workshop in 1995 of outline modules on entrepreneurship and small enterprise development for incorporation in vocational training programmes, the ILO assisted in their adaptation and integration into the vocational training systems in Barbados, the Bahamas and Grenada.

A key task of the ILO in the Caribbean is to assist constituents in the development of tripartite mechanisms in their industrial relations systems, and to strengthen organizations of employers and workers so that they can participate more effectively in these systems. As far as employers' organizations are concerned, the major activity of the biennium was the Seventh ILO Round Table for Caribbean Employers' Organizations, which provided an opportunity for the representatives of Caribbean employers' organizations to exchange information and experience on labour-related subjects. The Eighth Meeting of Caribbean Workers' Educators was also held during the biennium. The participants discussed matters such as globalization and its impact on trade unions and their members and designed programmes aimed at strengthening the organizational and negotiating skills of trade union officials.

As a follow-up to the subregional meeting on international labour standards held in the previous biennium, a series of national workshops were held. The principal aims of these workshops were to foster greater consultation among the social partners on labour matters and inform them about international labour standards and the ILO's supervisory procedures. Several of the workshops were of tripartite composition, while others were organized for either workers' or employers' organizations. In 1997, a national consultation was held in Trinidad and Tobago to enhance public understanding and knowledge of the ILO and its activities. The consultation coincided with the registration of the ratification by Trinidad and Tobago of Convention No. 100. Advisory services were also provided to several countries to strengthen their capacity to fulfil their reporting obligations under the ILO Constitution. In response to requests for assistance, technical comments were made on draft legislative texts in a number of countries. The assistance offered to Grenada on the draft Employment Act and the draft Industrial Relations Act involved the provision of technical advice to the Tripartite Labour Advisory Board, which was able to conclude its consultations on the draft legislation.

Action to promote a safer and healthier working environment in the Caribbean focused on strengthening the subregional and national legislative framework and training joint enterprise safety and health committees. Technical assistance was provided to the CARICOM Secretariat for the formulation of the CARICOM Draft Model Law on Occupational Safety and Health. Undertaken as part of the Harmonization of Labour Law Project, the draft was prepared for submission to the CARICOM Standing Committee of Ministers of Labour. At the national level, support was provided to a tripartite consultation to discuss proposed draft legislation in Guyana. Technical comments were also made on the draft Occupational Safety and Health Act in Trinidad and Tobago. Based on an analysis of the situation in Belize, a set of recommendations were made to the Government for the development of a national safety and health policy and legislation. A series of seminars were conducted for trade union members with particular responsibility for safety and health issues, including members of joint safety and health committees.

Considerable emphasis continued to be placed on activities on gender issues and the empowerment of women. Workers' education courses on gender awareness and gender issues were organized in collaboration with national trade unions in Antigua and Barbuda, Bermuda and Trinidad and Tobago. A project on women workers' rights was carried out in Suriname and included workshops to train instructors and a seminar on women's communication skills. A workshop on sexual harassment was held in St. Kitts for government officials, representatives of the social partners and NGOs. In Trinidad and Tobago, the ILO supported an initiative by a network of NGOs to hold a public discussion of the Government's recommendations for the establishment of an Equality Commission and the adoption of equal opportunities legislation. A national workshop in the same country considered the findings of an ILO survey on women entrepreneurs in micro- and small businesses. In addition to the performance of micro- and small enterprises run by women, the survey focused on the constraints facing women enterpreneurs in relation to credit, training, marketing and transportation, as well as strategies for expanding their opportunities in entrepreneurship and improving their welfare. The objectives of the workshop were to provide women with more information on organizations offering services to small businesses and to promote networking between women entrepreneurs. The ILO also collaborated in two sets of courses in Trinidad and Tobago for women in con-

struction. The second course culminated in the trainees building a house. However, employment opportunities for graduated trainees have not been plentiful, despite growth in the construction industry.

Asia and the Pacific

Asia and the Pacific is the largest developing region and one of the most economically dynamic, despite the financial crisis that affected several Asian countries towards the end of the biennium. The diverse and pressing needs of ILO constituents reflect the wide disparities in wealth, levels of development and social and labour problems between the countries of the region. Industrial relations systems continue to struggle under the strains of rapid and sometimes unbalanced growth and restructuring. Workers' rights are frequently challenged. Their protection from hazards and their treatment at the workplace are often poor, while poverty and exclusion continue to affect hundreds of millions of underemployed and unemployed workers. However, in a number of cases, broader recognition was given to the value of tripartite consultation, offering many opportunities for substantial progress in this direction in the medium term. On such issues as child labour, the need to take action was much more widely recognized, sometimes out of fear of trade sanctions.

In the assistance provided to constituents during the biennium, particular attention was paid to promoting the ratification and application of the ILO's fundamental Conventions and to completing, updating and following up country objectives. As a result of these efforts, a further nine ratifications of fundamental Conventions by countries in the region were registered during the biennium. In addition, a regional approach was adopted to a number of issues, including the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The biennium culminated in the Twelfth Asian Regional Meeting in Bangkok in December 1997.

Women's participation in the labour force in Asia has increased dramatically over the past two decades and the trend is likely to continue into the twenty-first century. Important gains have been made by women in employment and training, and in entry into diverse occupations and fields. But

The ILO's **Twelfth Asian Regional Meeting** was held in December 1997 against the background of the financial crisis affecting several Asian countries. The 200 delegates and advisers, representing 36 countries, who included 25 Ministers, concluded that "The current financial crisis facing some countries in Asia has focused attention on problems of employment and poverty and has highlighted the importance of sound macroeconomic policies, good governance and transparency in financial markets. A strong ILO response is required to minimize the adverse effects of the crisis." "Immediate steps should focus on training and redeployment of displaced workers and protection of women, migrants and other groups which may be especially adversely affected." The conclusions also called for:

- the organization by the ILO, as a matter of priority, of a regional tripartite meeting on economic and social responses to the financial crisis;
- the inclusion of anti-poverty strategies, established in consultation with the social partners, in overall economic policies;
- assistance to entrepreneurs to improve productivity, managerial effectiveness, technology and skills;
- close monitoring of the labour market to identify emerging skill requirements;
- continuation of the Director-General's campaign for the ratification of the seven fundamental Conventions;
- the strengthening of employers' and workers organizations;
- renewed efforts to expand the ILO's technical cooperation programme in Asia; and
- continued assistance in improving occupational safety and health, social protection, the empowerment of women and the removal of children from the most intolerable forms of child labour.

these gains in no way mask the persistent gender inequalities encountered by most of them in the labour market. Against this background, the strategy adopted was to ensure that the needs of women were covered by all ILO activities in the region. For example, in the employment generation programme in Cambodia, considerable effort has been made to ensure that women are equally represented on training courses and have equal access to credit facilities. At the same time, other activities concentrated specifically on the situation of women workers. These included a regional workshop on women's employment assistance, with participation from 13 countries, at which guidelines were developed to help policy-makers and programme planners improve the employment situation of women.[26] At a high-level meeting organized in Manila on gender issues in the world of work, the participating officials undertook to continue promoting gender equality at work and requested the ILO to organize a follow-up meeting on gender-responsive planning and analysis techniques. A training manual, including paralegal and counselling components, was also developed to deal with issues of sexual harassment at the enterprise level.[27] The manual is intended for the members of the company-level bipartite committees established under the sexual harassment legislation adopted in the Philippines in 1995. A seminar on equality and women workers' rights was held in China to overcome difficulties in the application of Convention No. 100 and launch a project to improve the situation of women workers in the country.

Examples of **projects targeting specific categories of child workers** include:

- the measures taken in *Nepal* to combat the "Kamaiya" system of bonded labour, particularly through support for NGOs, which have provided over 500 Kamaiya children with non-formal education and have enrolled most of them in government schools, as well as establishing an association for Kamaiya workers, affiliated to a national trade union federation, with the result that the Kamaiyas are no longer in a state of passive non-resistance to their fate;
- the project in the *Philippines* carried out by the Visayan Forum, which organizes events to contact child domestic workers and provide services for them, and has held consultations with domestic workers and legal experts to lobby for the adoption of the proposed Housekeeper Act; and
- the action taken in the north of *Thailand*, with ILO-IPEC support, by the Daughters' Education Programme and by other NGOs, as well as by teachers, to prevent child prostitution and child labour, particularly through educational and vocational training programmes and campaigns, including puppet shows, drama performances and exhibitions, which has developed into a community movement.

Other activities concentrated on the promotion of entrepreneurship among women, including a project in India, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Under this project, two regional and two national training workshops were held for trainers, a training manual was published[28] and four country papers were produced on women's entrepreneurship in small and cottage industries.[29] The project resulted in the creation of a network of 15 participating organizations and a specialized documentation centre on women's entrepreneurship. A regional programme was carried out in several Asian countries to improve the welfare and working conditions of women migrant workers and to promote their employment in micro- and small enterprises (see Chapter 2 for further details). Technical assistance was also provided in Nepal to upgrade a training manual on the Development of Women Entrepreneurship in Tourism (DWET) and prepare a revised DWET credit guarantee fund.

In their growing awareness of the need to take action to combat child labour, several Asian countries were among the first to participate in the ILO-IPEC programme. The countries which have so far signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with ILO-IPEC are Bangladesh, Cambodia, India,

Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. ILO-IPEC is also active in China, Mongolia and Viet Nam. During the initial years of ILO-IPEC's operations in the region, its activities largely focused on the development of national programmes appropriate to the situation in each country. However, it has become clear that a number of child labour issues transcend national boundaries. Moreover, after five years of ILO-IPEC presence in the region, there is more scope for regional initiatives to discuss common problems and share experience between the new and older ILO-IPEC partner countries. There has also been increased recognition in recent years of the fact that regional bodies, and particularly the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), can play an important role in encouraging other countries in the region to adopt a more active approach to the problem.

Strengthening the legislative framework for combating child labour was identified as a priority in several countries. In Indonesia and the Philippines, as a result of a long-term process of assistance and advice on this issue, the prospects for the ratification of Convention No. 138 now seem good. A workshop on Convention No. 138 was also organized late in the biennium in China. Workshops in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands led to recommendations for the ratification of several of the ILO's fundamental Conventions, including Convention No. 138. Substantial progress was also made during the biennium in raising the awareness and capacity of the social partners and NGOs to deal with the issue of child labour. For example, national workshops on the role of trade unions in eliminating child labour were organized in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka and contributed to the development of action plans to be implemented with the support of ILO-IPEC. Examples of the initiatives taken by employers' and workers' organizations to combat child labour are described in Chapter 1.

East Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The countries of East Asia range from advanced industrial economies to least developed countries. They include economies in transition, which face grave problems of poverty, high unemployment and labour market dislocation as they move towards greater market orientation. They also comprise industrialized countries, where rapid economic growth has been translated into the expansion of productive and remunerative employment. In between, there are newly industrializing economies, such as Malaysia and Thailand, which still face problems of structural adjustment.

The East Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is located in Bangkok and is composed of 18 advisers. It covers Cambodia, China, Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. Country objectives currently exist for Cambodia, China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Viet Nam. The team assisted in the preparation of country objectives for Thailand, and revised objectives are under discussion with the Government and social partners of Viet Nam.

The Director-General's campaign for the more widespread **ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions** was encouraged by the ratification during the biennium of Conventions Nos. 100 and 138 by *Malaysia*, Convention No. 100 by the *Republic of Korea* and Conventions Nos. 98, 100 and 111 by *Viet Nam*. Moreover:

- *China* is examining the compatibility of its law and practice with Conventions Nos. 111 and 138, and a seminar on Convention No. 138 was held towards the end of 1997;

- in *Thailand*, in response to the interest voiced by a number of members of Parliament and government officials in the ratification of several Conventions, the ILO organized a seminar focusing on Convention No. 100; and
- *Viet Nam* is endeavouring to adjust its legal framework to the requirements of a market economy, and a seminar was held on the fundamental Conventions, with follow-up action focusing on the forced labour Conventions (Nos. 29 and 105).

Increased economic globalization has underlined the continued relevance of international labour standards throughout Asia and the Pacific and real progress has been achieved in several countries in the development and implementation of labour legislation and labour institutions. More governments are now taking ILO standards into account when formulating legislation and are seeking ILO specialist advice. A growing number of employers' and workers' representatives are also seeking information from the ILO on their rights and responsibilities. However, ratifications of fundamental Conventions in East Asia remain at a low level. To address this situation, advisory services were provided to constituents and seminars and workshops were organized to raise awareness of the fundamental standards and improve dialogue between the ILO's supervisory bodies and member States.

Advisory services were also provided to assist in drafting new labour legislation in several countries. Assistance of this nature contributed to the formulation of a new labour law in Cambodia, which was adopted in 1997, as well as the development of draft legislation covering collective bargaining in China. The ILO provided the Government of Thailand with comments on draft legislation on labour relations in state enterprises. Project proposals covering tripartism, collective bargaining, dispute settlement and labour inspection were developed to help improve the implementation of the labour codes in Cambodia, China, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam. Training was organized in each of these countries for conciliators and arbitrators and training materials were developed and translated into the national languages.[30] Guidance was provided in Viet Nam on the integration of the new Labour Court into the existing judicial system and instruction was offered on the role of labour judges and industrial relations issues. In Thailand, assistance was provided to a national tripartite committee to identify practical measures and develop an associated strategy to improve workplace cooperation.

Assistance for the **strengthening of employment services** included:

- support for the development by the Government of *Malaysia* of a strategy for the improvement of its manpower and employment services through the more effective provision of advice and training to jobseekers;
- a project to reinforce five employment services centres operated by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of *Viet Nam*, so that they can serve as model centres for replication throughout the country; and
- advice on improving the effectiveness of the employment promotion centres run by the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour.

Significant initial steps were taken to strengthen the capacity of labour administrations in such areas as conciliation, the promotion of collective bargaining, the enforcement of minimum wages and employment services. Capacity-building activities for labour inspectors included the holding of training courses, the organization of study tours and the preparation of training materials.[31] A major programme was developed to strengthen the capacity of the Chinese Ministry of Labour and will include labour inspection as one of its core elements. An assessment is planned of the labour inspectorate in Thailand to improve its overall impact, particularly with regard to compliance with minimum

wages. Blueprints and follow-up projects were also prepared for the long-term development of labour administrations in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam. To reinforce this work, a practical training guide on trainer training for labour administrations was published for use at the national level.[32]

If they are to respond effectively to the increasingly complex socio-economic environment in which they operate, employers' organizations in East Asia need to improve the range and quality of the advisory and other services that they provide to their members. They were therefore urged to develop as business entities with clear and focused strategic plans. Advisory services and training activities concentrated on improving their capacity to provide services to their members through staff training and development, the promotion of income-generating activities and the development of their information systems and research capacity. Particularly in transition countries, assistance focused on their capacity to influence the policy environment and their participation in tripartite processes. Examples of the improved services provided to their members include the launching of occupational safety and health programmes by employers' organizations in China, Malaysia and Thailand.

In recent years, East Asian workers' organizations have been seeking to establish an effective presence at the national level, particularly in countries in transition. The assistance provided to trade union leaders and members in these countries concentrated on enhancing their capacity to participate in industrial relations systems based on collective bargaining. Training materials were developed to assist in this process.[33] Special emphasis in workers' education activities was placed on raising awareness of workers' rights, the role of trade unions in occupational safety and health, activities to address gender issues and child labour. One important component of the assistance provided to the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions was the development of new policies and programmes on safety and health.

Further action was taken to improve tripartitism through the development of national plans of action for the promotion of workplace cooperation and the identification of the necessary action at the advisory, legislative, information and capacity-building levels. A subregional tripartite meeting was held in Hong Kong, China, to help the tripartite constituents deal with new and emerging industrial relations issues. Further guidance was provided through the preparation of practical guidelines on how to implement workplace cooperation.[34]

ILO action to help East Asian countries combat unemployment and poverty continued to include advice and guidance on macroeconomic and employment policies. Technical studies on macro-policies and globalization in China, Malaysia, Mongolia, Thailand and Viet Nam,[35] as well as a study on micro-interventions for poverty elimination in China,[36] served as instruments to sensitize senior policy-makers and the social partners to the principal policy issues involved. In Thailand, the ILO's proposals on poverty alleviation were incorporated into the United Nations Ten-Point Strategy for Poverty Alleviation, which was submitted to the Prime Minister. In collaboration with UNDP, the ILO also provided support for the development of the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan, which emphasizes a people-centred development strategy aimed at reducing income disparities.

During the biennium, the ILO assisted in the development of employment policy in a number of East Asian countries (see box). One important aspect of this assistance was the provision of policy advice on labour migration issues, based on studies to identify the causes and patterns of labour emigration in China and Viet Nam.[37] A synthesis report covering the

ILO technical advisory activities for the **development of national employment policies** included:

- assistance to the Government of *China* for the definition of the main components of a proposed Employment Promotion Law;
- advisory services on urban employment promotion in *China*, which were followed up by the formulation of a project on urban employment promotion for the Ministry of Labour;
- recommendations for employment promotion in the *Lao People's Democratic Republic*, which were used by the Asian Development Bank to develop an employment promotion and training project; and
- assistance to the Government of *Viet Nam* for the formulation of a National Employment Programme.

Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) sets out a number of recommendations to facilitate skilled labour flows in the subregion.[38] The six countries in the GMS were also assisted in the development of a Subregional Labour Information Network and in making the related improvements in their national labour market information systems. With ILO support, the Government of Viet Nam developed and implemented labour force surveys and several other member States reviewed their national standard classifications of occupations. The publications prepared in support of this work include guidelines on the compilation and presentation of labour statistics based on administrative records.[39] The progress made by these countries constitutes a significant improvement in their capacity to produce better-quality labour market information and to monitor employment and labour markets more effectively.

Employment generation continued to be promoted through activities to develop micro- and small enterprises (MSEs). In Cambodia, in addition to policy advice on the formulation of MSE development policies and programmes, assistance was provided in the strengthening of the Association of Local Economic Development Agencies, which provides basic business training and loans to MSEs. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, advisory services on MSE development contributed to the formulation of the Socio-economic Development Plan for the Central Region and the national Five-Year Plan. Pilot training programmes for trainers based on the Improve Your Business (IYB) training package were carried out in Viet Nam in collaboration with the national Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Based on the success of pilot activities for the development of cooperatives and small enterprises by rural women's groups, the Government of Thailand is planning to incorporate similar activities in its own national programmes.

A survey was carried out on the **short-term socio-economic impact of the construction of rural roads** in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. One of the roads covered by the survey was in the Hune district, in the province of Oudomxay in the north of the country. The 24 km road directly serves 20 villages, which were previously linked to the main road only by footpaths and a track. It also indirectly serves other villages in the surrounding hills and mountains, which are still accessible only by footpath.

Since 1994, when road construction was commenced, the survey found a number of important changes in the villages, including:

- an increase in the production of cash crops, including paddy, vegetables and fruit, as well as livestock, which are sold to visiting dealers from nearby towns, or in the markets which have developed in several of the villages;

ILO-supported labour-based infrastructure development activities have played an important role in Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic in providing short-term employment and in promoting development through the construction of crucial infrastructure. The sustainability of the projects has been promoted by training local government officials and private sector personnel and by institutionalizing labour-based techniques in government programmes and national training curricula.

The effects of globalization and liberalization have placed significant pressure on the rapidly

- an increase in weaving by women as dealers visit the villages to place orders with them;
- the opening of shops and an increase in the number of rice mills in the villages;
- access to transport facilities, including tuk-tuks and taxis;
- a restructuring of educational facilities, with fewer but larger schools, as student numbers increase and more students travel to nearby towns to study; and
- the beginning of demographic changes, as people leave remote villages to live near the road.

However, the evaluation also pointed to an intensification of slash and burn agriculture and logging by the army, leading to the destruction of forests and the preparation of new areas of agricultural land.

developing countries of East Asia to reform their training systems. In collaboration with the ILO Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP), advisory services were provided to identify major human resource development issues at the country level and develop the related technical proposals. In view of the increase in labour migration in the subregion, high-level meetings were organized to develop new approaches to regional skills standards. At the national level, the support included:

- assistance in Cambodia for the preparation of the National Strategy for Technical Education and Vocational Training, which has now been adopted by the Government;
- the provision of advisory services to review the long-term development of modular training systems in China and assistance to the Ministry of Labour and the social partners for the development of a long-term strategic plan on employment and training;
- the design of a project for Mongolia to support vulnerable groups in selected communities through the development of employment-oriented skills training; and
- the preparation of a detailed technical report on the implementation of Thailand's First National Plan on Skill Development, a number of the recommendations of which were taken up by the Asian Development Bank in its skill development loan project.

An independent evaluation of a skills training project launched in Cambodia in 1996 found that, of the 5,000 persons trained, some 77 per cent had used the skills gained for employment and income-generation purposes. The higher incomes gained by the trainees have contributed significantly to improving the nutrition, education and general health of their families.

Throughout these activities, the approach adopted was to ensure that the needs of particular target groups, including youth, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities, were covered by all technical advisory and cooperation activities. Nevertheless, specific activities were also carried out to help these groups. Examples include the support that continued to be provided to the Disability Review Group, set up at the ILO's recommendation in Mongolia, for the development of a comprehensive policy to promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. Situation analyses were also car-

The ILO helped a number of countries to **introduce new social security provisions or expand existing schemes**, including:

- *China*, where a Social Security Act and regulations on employment injury and unemployment insurance were formulated and further assistance was requested to reform the health insurance system for urban workers and pensioners;
- *Lao People's Democratic Republic*, where an assistance project was undertaken to strengthen the scheme for public sector employees and establish a scheme to cover workers in the expanding private sector;
- *Malaysia*, where the ILO assisted in a national project to introduce social insurance pensions, extend social security to groups of the population that are not currently covered and rationalize the financing of health care; and
- *Viet Nam*, where the ILO provided training and assistance to help strengthen the social security scheme for employees and develop assistance measures for vulnerable groups.

ried out in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to identify programme needs. A project carried out in China, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam led to the development of guidelines for job placement officers on assisting persons with disabilities in finding employment.[40] The guidelines were introduced to the employment services in these countries through a series of workshops and were tested through pilot activities.

Although working conditions are covered by extensive regulations in many countries in the region, problems of implementation are frequent, particularly in the small and medium-sized enterprises which provide work for the majority of the workforce. Activities to improve working conditions in small enterprises through the Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE) approach were carried out in Bhutan and Nepal. A contribution was also made to raising general awareness of safety and health issues in the region through the translation and wide dissemination of ILO guides and training materials on safety and health in China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam, as well as the holding of regional and national conferences and workshops. Important progress was made in this respect in China, where new chemical safety regulations were adopted in January 1997 for the implementation of the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), which was ratified by China in 1995.

Social security schemes remain largely undeveloped in relation to the level of economic development attained by many countries in the region. However, the steps taken by a number of countries with the assistance of the ILO demonstrate the higher priority that is being given to social security issues by constitutents. Guidance was also provided to constituents on an emerging problem in the region in the form of a study on ageing in Asia and the needs of older persons for social protection.[41]

South-East Asia and the Pacific Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The strong economic performance of South-East Asian countries, at least until the very end of the biennium, which has been associated with rapid employment growth and a reduction in poverty levels, stands in stark contrast to the generally lacklustre performance and limited employment opportunities of the Pacific island nations. Nevertheless, despite their very different situations, governments in both South-East Asia and the Pacific are increasingly adopting a more integrated approach that combines policies for productive employment generation with the enhancement of education and training and the building of an effective framework for the development of human resources.

The South-East Asia and the Pacific Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is composed of five advisers and is based in Manila. It covers Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Solomon Islands and the island countries of the South Pacific. Country objectives for Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines were finalized during the biennium 1994-95, while those for

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Efforts to promote the **ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions** during the biennium included:

- a tripartite seminar held in *Fiji* in 1997 recommended the ratification of other fundamental Conventions, and particularly Convention No. 87;
- the workshops and seminars held in *Papua New Guinea* and the *Solomon Islands* led to recommendations for the ratification of Conventions Nos. 87, 100, 111 and 138, and the Government of the Solomon Islands submitted for the first time in many years 11 reports on the application of ratified Conventions; and

- in the *Philippines*, a successful dialogue with legislators in 1996 prepared the ground for the ratification of the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 147), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), with further momentum for the ratification of the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176).

Fiji were completed during the biennium 1996-97. The country objectives for the Philippines were updated in 1996. The team's work was successfully implemented in the Philippines and significant progress was made in Fiji. However, problems relating to freedom of association and difficulties in securing funding for technical cooperation projects reduced the intensity of the team's activities in Indonesia.

Although acceptance of ILO principles and international labour standards varies considerably from country to country in the subregion, several member States have now expressed a renewed interest in ratifying fundamental ILO Conventions, and particularly Conventions Nos. 87, 100, 111 and 138. The South Pacific island countries continued to experience difficulties, not only in the ratification of ILO Conventions, but also in meeting their reporting obligations. Technical advice was therefore provided and workshops and seminars held on standards-related matters. Priority was also given to strengthening the institutional capacity of employers' and workers' organizations in South Pacific island countries. Based on a study on the potential for tripartism in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa, a high-level subregional meeting was held in August 1997 on the promotion of tripartism.[42] Building on what had already been achieved and based on local custom and practice, various means of action were explored and each participating country developed a national plan of action.

In line with the conclusions of the Social Summit, there is increased awareness in the countries covered by the team of the need to combat social exclusion and ensure that the benefits of overall economic growth reach the most disadvantaged social groups. Assistance was provided to national institutions in Indonesia and the Philippines to evaluate a range of micro-interventions to combat poverty. This included the preparation of a study on targeted programmes to assist special groups and combat social exclusion in Indonesia.[43] The study provides guidance on effective means of promoting equality for women, combating child labour and alleviating poverty. Advisory services were also provided to several countries on labour migration issues, supported by the findings of studies of structural changes, migration pressures and related policy issues in Indonesia and the Philippines. Regional studies were undertaken of the challenges of the globalization process with a view to increasing the understanding of policy-makers of the issues involved and their impact at the national level.[44]

Many requests continued to be received from constituents for assistance in the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In response, support was provided to draw up an action agenda to improve productivity in Indonesia and the Philippines, with the active collaboration of employers' and workers' organizations. In close consultation with the tripartite constituents, the authorities in the South Sulawesi province of Indonesia were assisted in formulating strategies for skills development and the promotion of small enterprises. In the Philippines, technical support was provided for the establishment of a one-stop business centre for small enterprises. Integrated small enterprise development programmes were also

The major achievement in the subregion during the biennium in the field of **occupational safety and health** was the adoption in *Fiji*, with the full support of the social partners, of the Safety and Health at Work Act, which may be considered as the first example of modern safety and health legislation in the Pacific island countries. The new Act provides a comprehensive framework for dealing with problems at the workplace and establishes the responsibility of employers to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. The Act was developed and introduced with support from both employers' and workers' organizations. The Fiji experience will be used to promote the adoption of more modern and comprehensive safety and health legislation in other Pacific island countries.

Another important step was the setting up with ILO support in the *Philippines* of a network on chemical safety composed of the relevant government agencies, employers' and workers' representatives and other partners with specialized knowledge.

launched in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, while the integrated human resource development approach formulated in Fiji with ILO support includes components targeted at the promotion of small enterprises, cooperatives and tourism.

The increasing importance attached by governments and employers' and workers' organizations to certain key features of workers' welfare and protection resulted in a growing number of requests for assistance in the fields of occupational safety and health, the improvement of working conditions and social protection. In this connection, the strategy of the team has been to strengthen the capacity of the tripartite constituents to act independently and to foster cooperation and partnerships extending beyond the ILO's constituency. Assistance was provided to develop existing occupational safety and health information networks in Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines.

Considerable emphasis continued to be given to programmes to improve working conditions in small enterprises. New materials were developed to increase the effectiveness of WISE programmes and strengthen the involvement of employers' and workers' organizations.[45] Complementing the WISE approach, the development of plant-level occupational safety and health capacities among workers' representatives included the instruction of a core group of national trainers and the preparation of training materials in local languages. Building on the lessons learned from IYB and WISE (see Chapters 2 and 3, respectively, for more information on these methodologies), a regional programme was designed to explore practical ways of linking enterprise development with the improvement of working conditions in micro-enterprises. The advice and training on productivity improvement provided to employers'

Improve Your Business (IYB) and Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE)

Although the IYB and WISE approaches and materials are widely accepted as tools to address the development and improvement of working conditions in small enterprises, the two issues have normally been addressed separately. During the biennium, a regional programme was implemented in the *Philippines, Malaysia* and *Nepal* to develop and test training materials for small enterprises integrating the two concepts of IYB and WISE.

Some 115 entrepreneurs and 70 trainers, drawn from labour ministries, NGOs and small enterprises, were trained during the biennium, including a large proportion of women entrepreneurs. The programme demonstrated the viability of training micro-entrepreneurs through NGOs in Asian countries. Preliminary assessments indicate that trainees have benefited greatly in improving the performance and working conditions of their enterprises, particularly where partner organizations have provided follow-up advisory services and micro-credit. The materials tested in the programme will be fully developed and made available for regional application and the approach will be further refined in subsequent programmes.

organizations in Indonesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines also linked productivity enhancement to the improvement of working conditions through the WISE approach.

Social protection is becoming a major preoccupation in South-East Asia. While social security systems have grown rapidly, they still effectively only cover a limited segment of the workforce. Moreover, the design and management of social security systems have generally been unable to keep pace with the growth of the systems. Progress continued to be made in this field in the Philippines where, as the culmination of several years of assistance, a report on social protection resulted in the appointment of a national coordinating committee to determine policy and priorities for the implementation of the recommendations.[46] Preliminary results of a survey of disability protection resulted in plans to develop a new disability benefit programme covering around 20 million insured persons which will be in conformity with the relevant ILO Conventions. Assistance was also requested in the implementation of the 1995 National Health Insurance Act.

South Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The opening of South Asian economies is generating pressure for labour market reforms, as well as concerns about employment prospects. Indeed, most South Asian countries face daunting problems of underemployment and poverty, with the majority of the labour force still working in the agricultural sector. Even though the rate of economic growth in recent years has been encouraging, at about 5 per cent per annum, formal sector growth has not been employment-intensive. Labour movement from agriculture has been slow and has concentrated on rural non-agricultural employment and urban informal activities. Urban unemployment is also emerging as a problem in some countries.

The South Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, which is located in New Delhi and is composed of 12 advisers, covers Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The country objectives reviews commenced in the previous biennium were completed for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The country objectives for Pakistan were updated and those for Bangladesh are nearing finalization.

The countries of South Asia continued to make progress during the biennium in the ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions. They have also continued to work towards improvements in the application of ratified Conventions, although

The situation as regards the **ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions** is as follows:

- the Conventions on **equality** have already been widely ratified by South Asian countries, with *Sri Lanka* now considering ratification of Convention No. 111 and *Pakistan* and *Bangladesh* ratification of Convention No. 100;
- all South Asian countries except Nepal have ratified one or other of the **forced labour** Conventions (Nos. 29 and 105): *Nepal* is processing Convention No. 29 for ratification and *India* has removed the last legislative constraint to ratifying Convention No. 105 and is expected to do so shortly;
- although adherence to the **freedom of association** Conventions is less strong, during the biennium *Sri Lanka* ratified Convention No. 87, *Nepal* ratified Convention No. 98 and *India* indicated its willingness to engage in dialogue with the ILO concerning the incompatibilities between the two Conventions and its national law and practice relating to public service employees; and
- in relation to **child labour**, the poor level of ratification of Convention No. 138 in Asia as a whole was improved by *Nepal's* ratification of the Convention.

Significant progress was achieved by several South Asian countries in the fields of **industrial relations and dispute settlement**, including:

- the agreement by the Government of *India* to appoint a permanent review committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations made by the tripartite Indian Labour Conference as well as, following workshops organized by the ILO, the development by Indian labour court/tribunal judges and conciliation officers of action plans to improve the dispute settlement process and labour court administration in the country;
- the establishment in *Nepal* of its first Central Labour Advisory Council and Labour Court, for which ILO assistance included extensive discussions with the Government and the social partners and training for the labour court judge and a senior official from the Ministry of Labour; and
- the ratification by *Nepal* and *Sri Lanka* of the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No.144).

much remains to be done in this respect. Bonded labour, equality of opportunity and treatment for women, the protection of freedom of association in EPZs and restrictions on the right to strike are among the issues which still pose major challenges to the social partners in some countries. In this connection, technical assistance was provided to Bangladesh, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for the revision of existing labour laws or the drafting of new legislation.

Industrial relations issues have gained considerable significance in South Asia, with broad recognition of the contribution that sound industrial relations can make to employment, efficiency and competitiveness in member States. Assistance in this area focused on tripartism as a tool for social and economic development. An important aspect of this work was the support provided in response to requests by constituents for help in strengthening conciliation skills and improving the functioning of industrial courts. Studies on the administration of labour courts were carried out in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka and assistance was provided to Ministries of Labour in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This included information on the experiences of labour courts in other countries, training materials in the national languages and the organization of tripartite training courses.

The improvement of industrial relations was also pursued through national bipartite workshops to equip the social partners with better negotiating skills, greater bargaining capacity at the enterprise level and the ability to settle disputes in an amicable fashion. Capacity-building activities for trade unions emphasized the problems of rural and migrant workers, contract labour and the conditions of workers in EPZs, as well as action to combat child labour. Studies were carried out of the impact of economic reforms on rural workers and their industries, while workers' education activities on international labour standards in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka gave special emphasis to the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110), and the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141). The findings of a series of case-studies on contract labour and the casualization of the workforce in specific economic sectors in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were discussed at a regional seminar. In India, the representatives of five national trade unions discussed strategies for the protection of contract workers and made recommendations for amendments to the Contract Labour (Abolition and Regulation) Act, 1970.

As employers in South Asia face increased competitive pressure, they are turning to their representative organizations for assistance. With a view to strengthening the capacity of employers' organizations to provide improved services to their members, capacity-building programmes were developed in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. These focused on productivity enhancement, business support services, the promotion of women in the private

The ILO made contributions to the **national planning process** in several countries, including:

- *India*, where an ILO recommendation for the establishment of active employment exchanges catering for the needs of both the organized and unorganized sectors has been included in the Approach Paper to the country's Ninth Five-Year Plan;
- *Nepal*, where the findings and recommendations of the employment policy review (see Chapter 2) served as inputs to the country's Ninth Plan and were followed up by technical assistance to carry out the first ever national labour force survey; and
- *Pakistan*, where ILO input on the employment and labour market situation in the country was used in the preparation of the chapter on Employment and Manpower Planning of the Ninth Plan document: it is planned to expand this input into an employment policy framework for the social partners.

sector, the management of change in enterprises, the elimination of child labour, cleaner production and occupational safety and health services. A project on occupational safety and health resulted in the establishment of a Safety Cell in the Employers' Federation of Pakistan. The employer participants at a South Asian Employers' Symposium agreed to coordinate approaches on matters of common concern, and particularly labour law, labour market reform, employment and child labour. In a resolution, they decided to explore the possibility of creating a subregional employers' federation, to be called the South Asian Federation of Employers (SAFE).

The principal concerns with regard to employment policy were to assist in the development of both macroeconomic policies and micro-interventions designed to alleviate poverty, promote employment and mitigate the adverse effects of the reform process on employment and labour. Assistance in relation to labour market policies focused on the need to develop desirable and economically feasible adjustment programmes leading to increased employment opportunities, greater labour market flexibility and enhanced social protection. At the regional level, reviews and synthesis studies prepared for ten Asian countries on the effects of macroeconomic policies and micro-interventions on poverty were discussed at a regional tripartite workshop. The recommendations emerging from this workshop provided a basis for the technical assistance delivered at the national level. A report on economic reforms and labour policies in India [47] attracted considerable attention among policy-makers and the social partners, and the suggestion to introduce a national minimum wage for unskilled labour is under discussion by tripartite bodies. Following the preparation of a report on the implications of privatization for employment and social protection in Pakistan, the Ministry of Labour is considering setting up a special cell to implement the recommendations of the report.[48] The employment generation schemes that were developed in the subregion included a project for irrigation and rural road construction in Nepal; pilot and demonstration projects in the Indian states of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu; and a project to promote income-generation schemes through community-based organizations and NGOs in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Strategies and action plans for cooperative enterprises were formulated in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, while a cooperative support project for tribal and indigenous peoples (INDISCO) was implemented in India (see Chapter 2).

The growing importance of human resource development and employment-related training in South Asia was reflected in the requests for assistance made by constituents, particularly in support of capacity-building by employers' and workers' organizations. Technical advice was provided on vocational trade testing in Sri Lanka to ensure that the national vocational training system is more demand-oriented and reflects national and international

standards. The technical assistance provided in Pakistan led to the establishment of Skill Development Councils (SDCs) and closer collaboration between the Government and employers' organizations. A survey was also carried out on the human resource development concerns of employers' organizations representing 11,000 employers in South Asia. The findings of the survey are being used by employers' organizations in their strategic planning for the coming decade.

In view of the increased importance attached to the development of social security schemes in the subregion, guidance was also provided to several countries on the extension of social protection. The ILO assisted the Government of Pakistan in developing a national pension scheme which will expand coverage from 2 to 7 million beneficiaries and will provide increased benefits. In India, the ILO reviewed the problems of developing a social security system for workers in unorganized sectors. In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, workers were familiarized with various types of social security schemes and new schemes were recommended to the respective governments.

Europe

Economic and social trends in the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Transcaucasia continued to be varied and contradictory. While economic progress is clearly visible in a number of countries in the region, it is not yet reflected in corresponding social improvements. Indeed, differences in income and living conditions are tending to widen at the national level. Unemployment rates remain high and are still rising in some countries. Real wages are lagging behind economic growth and minimum wages are far too low to fulfil their economic and social functions. Industrial relations systems in most countries are still in their initial stages of development and the social partners need to be further strengthened. Social protection systems also need reforming to restore their financial sustainability and fulfil their functions of forging social solidarity and combating poverty. However, there was increased awareness throughout the region of the need to achieve a better balance between economic and social development and of the important role of social dialogue in developing consensus in support of reform measures.

Since the beginning of the Director-General's campaign in 1995 for the more widespread ratification of the ILO's **seven fundamental Conventions**, the following ratifications (or confirmations of previous obligations) have been registered (as of 31 December 1997):

- Convention No. 29 — *Estonia* and the *former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*;
- Convention No. 87 — the *former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and the *Republic of Moldova*;
- Convention No. 98 — the *former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and the *Republic of Moldova*;
- Convention No. 100 — *Estonia* and the *former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*;
- Convention No. 105 — *Albania, Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovakia* and *Slovenia*;
- Convention No. 111 — *Albania*, the *former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and the *Republic of Moldova*; and
- Convention No. 138 — the *former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and *Slovakia*.

Central and Eastern Europe Multidisciplinary Advisory Team

The Central and Eastern Multidisciplinary Advisory Team is located in Budapest and is composed of seven advisers. It covers the following 18 countries: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzego-

vina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. From 1998, Belarus and the Russian Federation will be covered by the Eastern European and Central Asian Multidisciplinary Advisory Team. Much of the ILO's work in the subregion during the biennium drew upon the conclusions and resolutions adopted at the Fifth European Regional Conference (Warsaw, 1995) and focused on tripartism, employment promotion, social security reform and the strengthening of employers' and workers' organizations.

Important steps were taken by a number of countries in the subregion, with ILO support, to set up **institutions of social dialogue**, including:

- the establishment in *Albania* of a standing tripartite wage committee, which will form part of the tripartite National Council of Labour, as a specialized forum for discussing and designing wage reforms;
- the creation in *Croatia* of a tripartite Social and Economic Council, following an agreement between the trade unions which overcame a number of practical obstacles and envisages "social elections" within a year to gauge their representativity; and
- the adoption of legislation in *Romania* establishing a tripartite Economic and Social Council, in which social dialogue will be institutionalized.

In the ILO's work in Central and Eastern Europe, particular emphasis was placed on the development of labour legislation through the ratification and implementation of international labour standards, and especially the ILO's fundamental Conventions. Since the beginning of the Director-General's campaign, some 20 ratifications of these Conventions by the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (or confirmations of previous obligations) have been registered.

In almost all the countries in the subregion, national tripartite seminars were held to discuss industrial relations structures and procedures, based on the provisions of ILO standards and the experience of other countries in the subregion and of Western European countries. Some of the seminars focused on specific areas of labour relations, such as the role of tripartite bodies for economic and social consultation, collective bargaining practices and legislative arrangements, procedures for the settlement of labour disputes and the role of labour courts. Study visits to Western European countries on labour relations issues were organized for experts from Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and tripartite regional seminars on this subject were held in Cyprus and Warsaw. These opportunities for training and the exchange of experience built up a solid core of experts familiar with ILO principles concerning labour legislation and industrial relations practices.

ILO technical cooperation projects in *Bosnia and Herzegovina* are designed to **reinforce the peace process** by promoting democracy, economic restructuring, the return of refugees and the establishment of social institutions. The first projects focused on:

- assistance in the development of a draft Labour Code, which provides protection for work-related rights and is adapted to the market economy in the country; the draft Code was being examined by the national Parliament at the end of the biennium;

ILO technical cooperation activities also led to the strengthening of participation by the social partners in the design and implementation of local restructuring policies in three provinces where heavy industry, such as coal and steel production, is no longer competitive. In three provinces in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation respectively, greater awareness was created among the tripartite constituents of possibilities for employment preservation and the creation of new jobs at the local level. A tripartite seminar was also

- the reactivation of a vocational training centre in Goradze for the provision of training adapted to the needs of national reconstruction; and
- the establishment of four model support centres for the development of small enterprises for replication in other areas of the country; the staff of each centre is representative of the political and religious components of the country.

Further projects were launched or planned covering areas such as the establishment of a new industrial relations system, the restructuring of the social protection system, vocational rehabilitation and employment promotion.

organized in Ukraine, in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to examine the serious problems of wage policy experienced in the country, including wage arrears. The seminar enabled the participants to reach a large measure of consensus on the importance of solving the problem of wage arrears and gradually increasing the minimum wage to a level at which its social and economic function is restored. Following the signature of the Dayton Agreements, the ILO also contributed to reinforcing the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina through a concentration of technical cooperation activities designed to bring together members of the different communities (see box).

Considerable emphasis was placed on strengthening employers' and workers' organizations in the subregion and reinforcing their capacity to represent their members and participate effectively in industrial relations structures at the various levels of the economy. Advisory services were provided to employers' organizations and training seminars were organized in all the countries of the subregion to strengthen their internal management and structures, develop capacities for collective bargaining and enable employers' representatives to fulfil their role in the various tripartitite bodies. Similarly, numerous training seminars and workshops were organized at the national and subregional levels for workers' organizations in all the countries covered by the team. These activities focused on workers' education, collective bargaining, the implications of privatization, women workers' rights, occupational safety and health and trade union journalism. Special surveys were prepared on workers' education and collective bargaining experiences as guidance materials for trade unions in the region.[49] Although it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of these activities, there are indications in most of the countries concerned that, despite many obstacles and setbacks, sometimes due to rivalries between organizations, there is increased recognition of the importance of social dialogue and the role of the social partners in this respect.

Although many of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe have been able to restore economic growth, it remains uneven and in almost all cases has been insufficient to attain pre-transition levels of GDP. Moreover, the level of unemployment remains high in most countries, with long-term unemployment increasing and disadvantaged groups and the regions which are undergoing structural reform experiencing particular difficulties. One

After a detailed analysis of the transition process in *Hungary* over the past seven years, with particular regard to economic and social developments, the **national employment policy review** pointed out that unemployment is around 10 per cent, and is particularly high for young people and among the gypsy community. In response, a wide range of active labour-market programmes have been developed, particularly for vulnerable groups, although this approach could be taken further. Among a large number of policy recommendations, the review suggested that policies should aim to shift from low value added exports to higher value added production based on more advanced technology. The Minister of Labour of Hungary and other representatives of the Government expressed appreciation of the report. The Government added that it would assist in improving its policy options for the promotion of economic growth and employment.

example of the macro-economic guidance provided to constituents was the country employment policy review carried out in Hungary.[50] A tripartite conference on employment policy was also organized in the Russian Federation. The conference discussed and endorsed wide-ranging policy recommendations and conclusions covering such fields as employment-intensive growth, industrial and regional policies, the promotion of small enterprises, education reforms, special measures for disadvantaged groups and the reform of social protection. A large number of these recommendations were subsequently incorporated into the Government's strategy to tackle its growing employment problems. A similar tripartite conference was organized in Ukraine and will be used as a starting-point for a country employment policy review, which will be finalized during the course of 1998.

With a view to stimulating a broad exchange of experience on the problems of women workers in transition countries, a regional tripartite seminar was organized on gender issues and equality. The subjects examined by the participants included the relevant ILO standards, action by trade unions in favour of women workers, policies for the promotion of entrepreneurship for women, the situation of women on the labour market and ILO action to follow up the Beijing Conference. The participants at the seminar endorsed a series of policy recommendations for the promotion of gender equality in the labour market. In a pilot exercise, designed for replication in other countries in the region, a series of tripartite seminars were organized in Hungary to examine the difficulties of particular categories of women workers. Guidelines and recommendations were also developed and published on promoting the employment of ethnic minorities in Central and Eastern Europe.[51]

ILO action to assist in the development and reform of social protection systems focused on stimulating the policy debate, taking into account ILO standards on social security. It was also designed to increase the transparency of certain policy options through the introduction of social budget modelling and the provision of policy advice on the financial sustainability and improved governance of social protection systems. A project was carried out in Slovakia for the introduction of a social budget model specially designed for transition economies. Officials from various ministries and other government institutions were trained in the operation of the model. A similar project was commenced in Ukraine. In order to clarify a number of issues related to the options and need for the reform of pension systems, a tripartite regional consultation was organized to formulate an ILO approach to the reform and development of pension systems in Central and Eastern Europe. Advisory services on pension reform were also provided to Croatia, Hungary and Poland.

ILO activities in Central Asia, Transcaucasia and Turkey

Although not covered by a Multidisciplinary Advisory Team during the biennium 1996-97, the Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and the Transcaucasian Republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) nevertheless benefited from ILO support and assistance. ILO action in these countries will be reinforced starting in 1998 with the establishment of the new multidisciplinary advisory team in Moscow. During the biennium 1996-97, country objectives were finalized for Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. Similar exercises were under preparation in other countries, including Kyrgyzstan.

At the request of the Governments of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the ILO was involved in social policy reviews, in collaboration with UNDP. These were the first attempts in the countries in the subregion to provide a systematic and critical review of macro-economic and social policies and to propose a coherent policy framework which combines the objectives of social policy as an integral component of macro-economic reform. The exercise was carried out in recognition of the fact that social development policies have to be carefully designed to ensure that average living standards are not allowed to deteriorate during the transition to a market economy, which would threaten the whole process of reform and the prospects for long-term growth. In the case of Uzbekistan, four major programmes have been recommended as part of the social development strategy in support of the reform process, namely:

- the creation of a social development fund;
- the launching of a social assistance programme;
- an initiative for a national capacity-building programme; and
- the improvement of information systems.

In Kazakhstan, the exercise focused on the employment and social protection components of a social strategy for the short, medium and long term.

ILO assistance to the countries in the subregion on standards-related issues was designed to improve national capacities to fulfil reporting requirements, as well as promoting the ratification of ILO Conventions or the confirmation of previous obligations. Since the beginning of the Director-General's campaign for the ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions, Georgia and Uzbekistan have ratified or confirmed previous obligations for six of the seven Conventions, while Turkmenistan has done so for all seven Conventions. The ILO also contributed to the translation and publication of reference works on international labour standards for Azerbaijan and Georgia. A tripartite subregional seminar was held in Azerbaijan on national legislation and international labour standards for CIS countries and another tripartite seminar on international labour standards was organized in Tajikistan. High-level officials from Armenia visited ILO headquarters to obtain information on different systems of labour law and the ILO provided comments on the first draft of a new labour code for the country. A seminar was also organized in Kazakhstan on the implementation of the Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148), and the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155).

In a pilot project for economically depressed areas in *Azerbaijan*, the ILO demonstrated how **self-employment and income-generation opportunities** can be promoted among the most socially disadvantaged groups of the population. By strengthening the capacity of the employment, training and retraining services in each district, designing, planning and coordinating training and employment schemes, and coordinating activities with other support agencies at the local level, the pilot project has resulted in the creation of some 200 jobs. Support mechanisms were also launched, including a revolving credit fund, the supply of raw materials and equipment, and marketing facilities. A tripartite review of the pilot project confirmed the feasibility of the approach and led to the extension of the project to another two districts. Similar projects are under consideration for Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The advisory services provided to the countries in the subregion covered topics ranging from labour migration policies and protecting the rights of migrant workers to the devel-

opment of labour statistics systems. Projects to promote entrepreneurship were launched in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, while a project on training, employment and income generation in depressed areas was implemented in Azerbaijan. Technical cooperation activities in Turkey covered social security reform and the development of a labour market information system.

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6 Support services

This chapter covers the activities of several ILO programmes whose functions are mainly of an internal administrative nature, as well as others which provide services directly to constituents, such as the ILO Library, the Bureau of Public Information and the conference and meeting services. One common feature of these programmes is that the efficiency with which they are delivered and their cost-effectiveness have a significant bearing on the quality of the technical services provided by the ILO to its constituents.

The delivery of the ILO's support services during the biennium 1996-97 was characterized by a number of themes. Foremost among these was the need for the ILO to make full use of technological progress to improve the services provided to constituents. Central to the efforts made in this respect was the launching of the ILO's Internet site early in the biennium and its subsequent development in 1997. Examples of other technological developments included the introduction of an Intranet system within the ILO, electronic voting at the International Labour Conference, electronic aids for translation and document processing, and the further development of automated personnel management systems. Another theme affecting the support services, which was given special urgency by the financial uncertainty affecting the Office at the beginning of the biennium, was the need to increase the cost-effectiveness of ILO operations. A variety of techniques were adopted for this purpose, including a reorganization of conferences and meetings, a restructuring of certain major programmes and the contracting out of services, where possible and advisable. Furthermore, particularly with a view to the implementation of the active partnership policy, which requires ILO services to be brought closer to constituents, efforts continued to be made to improve staff mobility and the skill level of ILO staff, as well as increasing the proportion of women in the professional staff and rejuvenating the staff as a whole. Needless to say, not all of these objectives were pursued with the same level of success. But one area in which undoubted progress was made was the Internet.

The **contents of the ILO's public Web site** (http://www.ilo.org) include:

- the ILO Constitution;
- ILO Conventions, Recommendations, comments by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and other related documents, through the ILOLEX database;
- the ILO's collections of national legislation, through the NATLEX database;
- the cost of social security database;
- ILO press releases and press kits and the speeches of the Director-General;
- the ILO magazine *World of Work*;
- the ILO Programme and Budget, the Report on the Activities of the ILO and programming and evaluation documents;
- Governing Body documents; and
- the catalogue of ILO sales publications and information on how to order them.

These will soon be supplemented by the ILO's safety and health information database (CISDOC) and other information resources, including the full text of many of the ILO's non-sales publications, such as working papers and other studies.

The ILO and the Internet

Over the past two or three years, it has become essential for an organization such as the ILO, in which information plays such a vital role, to have its own Internet site. The fact that the ILO was not in the first wave of international organiz-

ations to create an Internet site meant that it was able to make use of their experience in structuring its electronic communications systems. The ILO Internet site came on line in March 1996. The Intranet, which consists of an internal electronic communications system to assist officials in their work at headquarters and in the field, came on line one year later, in March 1997. If the number of visitors is an indicator of success, the results have been very satisfying. From some 30,000 visits in March 1996, the first month in which the ILO Internet site was operational, the numbers rose to nearly 400,000 in June 1997 and over 800,000 in January 1998.

By December 1997, some 15 major programmes at headquarters, two Multidisciplinary Advisory Teams (San José and Budapest) and several ILO Offices, including those in San José, Madrid, Moscow and Washington, DC, had set up home pages, either on the ILO Web site or linked to it. Several other major programmes had established home pages on the Intranet. Web editors had also been appointed for most headquarters major programmes and for many ILO Offices and multidisciplinary advisory teams. There evidently remains some way to go. Too many major programmes do not yet have home pages on the ILO's site. Some of the information provided is not yet updated on a sufficiently regular basis. However, a firm basis has undoubtedly been established for bringing the whole Office on line in the biennium 1998-99.

Already the revolution in working methods is making itself felt. Several major programmes started providing certain advisory services and information resources to constituents by electronic means during the biennium. Contacts with United Nations agencies and other development partners have been facilitated. In particular, for an Organization whose staff is spread throughout the world, electronic means of communication have facilitated contacts between staff at headquarters and in the various field offices and multidisciplinary advisory teams, thereby contributing to the objective of bringing the ILO's services closer to its constituents.

A password system was introduced on the ILO's Web site to allow Governing Body members to examine the documents for forthcoming sessions of the Governing Body as soon as they are available, instead of having to wait for their delivery by traditional means. This allows earlier consultations between Governing Body members on the issues under examination. Once they have been considered by the Governing Body, these documents are then made fully accessible over the Internet, making information on ILO policies and discussions available to a much wider public than in the past.

Several ILO support programmes were active during the biennium in making their materials available through the Internet. These included the Bureau of Public Information which, in addition to press releases and press kits, has placed on the Internet the ILO magazine *World of Work* and important speeches by the ILO directorate, the information leaflet on the ILO and some of the ILO's collection of photographs. The readership of *World of Work* has expanded considerably since it became available on line, without any increase in production costs. Moreover, the Web pages for the *World of Work* received an award for content and presentation. The ILO's Branch Office in Washington, DC, has also set up a site designed to increase awareness of the ILO, particularly in the United States and Canada. Spanish-language sites are run by the ILO Offices in San José and Madrid, while the Moscow Office's site is in Russian.

With assistance from the ILO, cases in which constituents **established or improved labour libraries and information centres** included:

- the Ministry of Labour of *Cuba*, where the labour library was reactivated and on-line information services introduced through the Internet;
- the Ministry of Labour of *El Salvador*, where the labour documentation centre was re-established and on-line services and ILO information products such as CD-ROMs were introduced;
- the Employers' Federation in *Mauritius*, which established an information centre linked to the Internet with a trained librarian; and
- the Ministry of Labour in *Nicaragua*, where the social and labour documentation centre was upgraded using ILO information management products.

The Publications Bureau uses the ILO's Web site to provide a listing and short description of recent ILO publications, as well as abstracts of articles appearing in recent issues of the *International Labour Review*, ILO publications catalogues and an electronic form to order publications. The complete text (in English, French and Spanish) of one article from each issue of the *Review* is also put on line. As a result of this initiative, the number of requests received from outside researchers and publishers to cite the featured article has risen substantially and there has been an increase in the number of subscriptions to the hard copy of the *Review*.

The Library has made available on the ILO Web site an Internet version of the International Labour Information System (ILIS) referral system, which allows access to databases, offers search features and provides an interface in English, French and Spanish. By the end of the biennium, most of the bibliographical databases produced by the ILO had been connected to the system for Internet access. The ILO Library makes use of its experience to assist constituents in the improvement of libraries, information centres and information networks, as well as to provide training and upgrade the documentation services provided by the ILO in the field. Moreover, through the Internet, the ILO has joined the Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC), an international non-profit library cooperative with over 22,000 member libraries in more than 60 countries. The OCLC shared on-line catalogue, in which the ILO now participates, contains over 40 million records and allows the ILO to make data on its information resources available to a vast community of libraries, universities, scholars and researchers. The OCLC acts as a broker for member libraries in the purchase of information products and services at reduced rates. ILO membership of OCLC is expected to produce significant productivity gains, especially for ILO field libraries and the libraries of ILO constituents and partner institutions, due to the massive increase in the speed, quantity and availability of information, and a reduction in information processing costs through economies of scale.

Reorganization of conferences and meetings

Decisions on the organization of ILO Conferences and major regional meetings adopted by the Governing Body in November 1995 led to reductions of some $2.1 million in the budget of the ILO Conference over the biennium, and some $2.8 million in the provision for major regional meetings. The major changes included the reduction to one week of the plenary sittings of the Conference set aside for discussion of the Director-General's Report, the publication of the *Provisional record* after the Conference and a decrease in the duration of regional conferences to three days, with a more focused agenda to be covered entirely in plenary sitting, without any parallel committees. The Governing Body also decided that ten

sectoral and five technical meetings would be held during the biennium 1996-97, as opposed to the 16 sectoral and seven technical meetings originally provided for in the Programme and Budget.

Efficiency measures in this context included the refinement and the introduction of further innovations in the electronic voting and conference computer systems, which greatly speeded up some of the procedures at the Conference. The electronic voting system was particularly valuable at the 84th (Maritime) Session of the Conference, where it facilitated the adoption of seven international labour standards and the provision of detailed results of all the votes very rapidly. The new services made available to enable delegates to follow the debate in plenary in the absence of the *Provisional record* included an Internet service to put the texts of speeches on line in their original language and a corresponding photocopy service.

Although there has been general understanding of the reasons underlying these efficiency measures, they have also elicited criticism. For example, the delegates at the Twelfth Asian Regional Meeting, the first regional meeting at which the new measures were applied, concluded that "Tripartite discussion at regional level is essential to the development of the ILO's programme, and with due regard to the cost implications, future Asian regional meetings should offer a longer period of discussion and full services to each of the three groups." The delegates added that "Advance circulation of views of ILO constituents can help to organize the work of the meeting more effectively." With regard to the International Labour Conference, the Governing Body decided in November 1997 to restore the publication of the *Provisional record* during conference sessions, starting in 1998. The effect of the other organizational measures relating to conferences and meetings will also be reviewed by the Governing Body.

Other organizational and efficiency measures

A number of other organizational and efficiency measures were adopted during the biennium. These included the reorganization of publications and document services, the extension of an evaluation system throughout the Office, the decentralization of financial operations to the regions, an improvement in the efficiency of the Staff Health Insurance Fund and several measures related to the ILO headquarters building.

The merger of all activities related to the production of documents for meetings and conferences into a single department resulted in economies of scale and greater efficiency in the management of document production and distribution All aspects of the production process were integrated in a single management structure, within which the extensive use of computer applications and job tracking systems has led to improved production controls and a more accurate identification of resource needs. Measures were also taken to reduce the overall volume of documents produced and to reduce the distribution of documents by traditional mail. The introduction of the Internet and Intranet, together with the expansion of the ILO's computerized terminology database ILOTERM, all contributed to the increased efficiency of editorial and translation work by improving access to reference materials. New technologies continued to be explored to achieve further productivity gains and savings in these operations. Work commenced, for example, on the gradual introduction of easy-to-

search electronic dictionaries, while developments were reviewed with regard to computer-assisted translation technology and voice recognition programmes for automated dictation. The more generalized use of electronic mail facilitated the implementation of a policy to increase the proportion of translation work that is contracted out, which rose by 25 per cent over the biennium, resulting in a further reduction of staff costs.

The establishment of a Publications Bureau in January 1996 marked the beginning of a new strategy and structure for the management of ILO publications, with the objective of increasing the visibility of the ILO and strengthening its image as a centre of excellence. The new structure emphasizes greater integration of editorial, production and marketing functions and strengthens the capacity of the Publications Bureau to work with the ILO's technical major programmes to improve the quality and sales potential of publications. The major ILO publication project of the biennium was the completion of the fourth edition of the *Encyclopaedia of occupational health and safety* (see Chapter 3 for more details). Through the ILO's licensing activities, publishers and institutions worldwide are encouraged to make available low-cost, local reprints of ILO publications and to translate and reproduce them in various forms. During the biennium, nearly 400 licensing agreements were concluded, of which over 100 were for translation (covering 29 languages).

An important element in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of ILO operations as a whole was the decision taken by the Director-General to apply the monitoring, evaluation and reporting system (MERS) developed by the ILO throughout the Office for the start of the biennium 1998-99. Already by the end of the biennium 1996-97, most new project outline documents contained reference to the ILO's monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools. Indications of the effectiveness of the MERS system include the requests for information and advice made by several other United Nations agencies and the confirmation by the South African Department of Labour that it is using MERS as a basis for developing its own programming, monitoring, evaluation and reporting system for internal management purposes. Other government departments in South Africa also requested ILO assistance in the application of the system.

In a development designed to speed up procedures related to the implementation of operational activities, preparations were made for the decentralization of financial responsibilities under the active partnership policy, to both external offices and departments at headquarters. Computer applications were developed, the Financial Rules were modified and administrative assistants were trained. Several major programmes at headquarters were due to assume responsibility for the approval of financial obligations at the beginning of 1998, while the decentralization of financial and budgetary functions to area and regional offices is expected to be completed during the course of 1998. This will enable field office directors to take control of project and office budget management, thereby eliminating current delays in obtaining approvals from headquarters to commit and spend funds. The system provides for the constant monitoring of field financial transactions.

A redistribution and modernization of work was carried out in the ILO's treasury operations to take into account a substantial reduction in general service staff resources. Progress was made towards the eventual elimination of the cash office through the rationalization of its opening hours, the development of computer systems to permit the payment of Conference and meeting staff through bank accounts and the introduction of other measures to reduce the

number of payments made in cash. Progress was also made on the modernization of the payments system through the execution of payments electronically. A computer application was developed to facilitate the preparation and monitoring of contributions to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund which, when brought into service, should result in a significant improvement in reporting to the Fund.

Cost reductions were achieved in several areas related to the administration of the headquarters building, telephone and mail rates and travel. These included savings arising out of the revision of outsourced contracts, including the contract for the headquarters building air-conditioning, heating and sanitary installations, and through a reduction in ILO staff working in this field. Savings of over 30 per cent on telephone rates were obtained through a renegotation of contracts with the Swiss PTT, while a reduction was also negotiated on the PTT contract for postage and a 25 per cent decrease in rates was obtained from the private companies used for the dispatch of special mail deliveries. A 10 per cent saving was made in relation to the biennium 1994-95 by promoting the optional use of discounted airline tickets carrying few or no restrictions.

Personnel issues

The themes underlying the implementation of personnel policy during the biennium continued to focus on the staff mobility policy and the achievement of a better balance in the staff in terms of sex and age; the provision of training to improve the skills of the staff and help them adjust to new methods of work; the adoption of measures, such as voluntary separations and redeployments, in response to the financial uncertainty at the beginning of the biennium; and the introduction of labour- and cost-saving measures for personnel management functions, including the management of personnel information and entitlements.

Efforts to ensure that staff are stationed where they can most effectively provide services to constituents, in line with the active partnership policy, resulted in a steady increase in the number of transfers between headquarters and the field. The number of such transfers rose from 47 in 1992-93, to 52 in 1994-95 and 59 in 1996-97. There has also been a steady rise in the proportion of women among professional staff, from 28 per cent in 1994, to 28.7 per cent in 1995, 29.4 per cent in 1996 and 29.7 per cent in 1997. With regard to the renewal of the staff, nearly 450 vacancies were processed during the biennium, which was almost twice the number for the biennium 1994-95. However, continued demands for the recruitment of experienced officials meant the Office was not able to increase the percentage of younger officials among professional staff. As a result, the average age of professional staff has remained constant at 46 over the past three biennia.

The introduction of new recruitment and selection procedures, on a trial basis, as well as a simplified and more equitable system of classification of posts, required lengthy negotiations with staff representatives. Work was also commenced on a review of human resource planning and career development in full consultation with the staff.

The staff training programme was significantly strengthened following the Governing Body's decision in November 1995 to increase the resources allocated to the training of the staff. An Office-wide training strategy was developed in collaboration with staff representa-

The principal features of the **staff training programme** during the biennium included:

- the introduction of management training programmes, attended by nearly 70 programme managers;
- the initiation of group training programmes at headquarters in 1997 in a variety of subjects, including communications and team work, the management of meetings, negotiations and project management, time management and presentation skills, in which nearly 400 officials participated;
- the implementation of regional group training programmes in Africa and Asia and the Pacific;
- an increase in the number of individual technical training programmes on various specialized subjects, with the number of beneficiaries rising from 60 in 1994-95 to over 150 in 1996-97; and
- the almost doubling of the number of beneficiaries of office automation courses during the biennium to a total of over 2,000.

tives. Training plans were initiated for each major programme, while the decentralization of training credits to the regions resulted in a doubling of the training funds available for field staff.

With regard to the automation of many of the functions related to personnel management, the Personnel Information and Payroll System (PERSIS) has been under development for several years and is currently scheduled for completion by the end of 1999. The project is an adaptation of a system that is being developed by the United Nations (known as the Integrated Management Information System, or IMIS), in which several United Nations agencies are participating. An internal review of the project confirmed that the delays encountered in its finalization are due to problems that have arisen in the development of IMIS. The review also indicated that ILO personnel systems will not encounter any special problems related to the year 2000.

Progress was achieved in the simplification and improvement of a number of aspects of personnel management and information systems. The recruitment planning activities for regular staff and experts were merged, with the introduction of a single database, and vacancies are now advertised on the ILO's Web site. The simplification of procedures and the reorganization of the work involved led to the elimination of the backlog of compensation and insurance claims and a radical shortening of delays in the payment of claims by the Staff Health Insurance Fund. The introduction of new procedures relating to education and family allowances resulted in a reduction in the staff required for these operations. The consolidated personnel database is now updated electronically and appropriate electronic access to basic personnel data has significantly reduced the circulation of personnel files. The new components of the PERSIS system which have been introduced allow the monitoring of some personnel rules automatically, while new developments in the programme covering contract extension work have significantly increased productivity.

Annexes

ANNEX I

Action taken on the resolutions adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 80th to 85th Sessions (1993-97)

In pursuance of a decision taken by the Governing Body at its 152nd Session (1962), the Director-General's Report to the Conference regularly includes a review of the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Conference over the five preceding years. This annex provides information on the steps taken in 1996 and 1997 to give effect to the resolutions adopted by the Conference at its 80th to 85th Sessions. Information given in previous years is generally not repeated, and action taken on the implementation of some resolutions is not described at length if the relevant information appears in the main text of the Report.

80th SESSION (1993)

Exposure to and safety in the use of biological agents at work

During the biennium the Office began work on guidelines on this subject for the use of government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations and other interested groups. Proposals for possible standard-setting in this field were submitted to the Governing Body in November 1997 as part of the draft portfolio of proposals for the agenda of the 88th Session of the Conference in the year 2000 (see Governing Body document GB. 270/2).

Social protection and the alleviation of unemployment and poverty, and the social dimension of structural adjustment and transition to a market economy

As follow-up to this resolution specific emphasis has been given to the promotion of tripartite consultations on issues of structural adjustment (see Chapter 2). A book entitled *Lessons from privatization*, containing more than 20 case-studies on labour issues in privatization, was published and is currently being used as an input to various tripartite seminars in developing countries and countries in transition, in order to illustrate measures as to how to include workers' concerns in processes of economic reform and structural adjustment.

The role of the ILO in technical cooperation

Concerted actions were taken to implement the ILO's technical cooperation strategy, adopted in November 1994 at the 261st Session of the Governing Body. The process of formulating country objectives, their periodic review and updating, provided occasions for interaction and strengthening of the multidisciplinary approach. The active partnership policy continued to provide the framework for adopting a demand-driven approach and the filling of important vacancies in the multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) provided the field structure with added technical strength in core areas of the ILO's mandate. There was a marked increase in Office-wide involvement in resource mobilization initiatives and also in defining subregional approaches to resource mobilization, where appropriate. The concrete links between international labour standards and technical cooperation projects were emphasized in a series of national ILS seminars carried out in the regions. Tripartite RBTC-funded national seminars on unratified Conventions were also organized to help countries overcome perceived obstacles to ratification (see Chapters 1 and 5). Increased headquarters/field dialogue provided a more rational and sound approach to the gradual decentralization of projects and programmes from headquarters to the field. There was evidence that the appointment of advisers on worker and employer activities to each MDT had contributed to increased constituent awareness of the ILO's unique tripartite structure.

81st SESSION (1994)

Post-apartheid South Africa

ILO activities in South Africa during the biennium continued to support the development of tripartism, employment services, labour inspection and trade union rights for rural workers (see Chapter 1 for details); employment promotion and introduction of the Start and Improve Your Business programmes (see Chapter 2 for details); employment equity legislation and drug and alcohol programmes in enterprises (see Chapter 3 for details); and collective bargaining, dispute settlement, small enterprise promotion and migrant workers (see Chapter 5 for details).

The 75th anniversary of the ILO and its future orientation

See Chapter 1 for detailed information on the process undertaken by the Governing Body on standard-setting policy and the revision of standards, as well as the Director-General's campaign on the ratification of the fundamental Conventions.

The World Summit for Social Development

The World Summit for Social Development was held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995. It clearly identified the role of the ILO within the United Nations system in the eradication of poverty and the promotion of employment. For detailed accounts of the follow-up activities undertaken by the Office submitted to the Governing Body Committee on Employment and Social Policy in November 1996, March 1997 and November 1997 see Governing Body documents GB.267/ESP/1, GB.268/ESP/2, GB.270/ESP/1/1, GB.270/ESP/1/2. Chapter 2 of this Report also describes these activities.

The role of private employment agencies in the functioning of labour markets

At its 85th Session in 1997, the Conference adopted the Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and Recommendation (No. 188). Convention No. 181

is a revision of the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 96). See Chapter 1 for details of these new instruments.

82nd SESSION (1995)

As a result of measures adopted to reform the International Labour Conference, there was no Resolutions Committee during the 82nd Session of the Conference.

83rd SESSION (1996)

The elimination of child labour

See Chapter 3 for a detailed account of activities in the field of the elimination of child labour.

Tripartite consultation at the national level on economic and social policy

Chapter 1 of this Report contains detailed information of ILO activities taken to strengthen tripartite consultation during the biennium, particularly as concerns the promotion of standards, labour legislation, and strengthening the capacity of workers and employers organizations to participate in tripartite consultations. Chapter 2 also contains information on contacts with the Bretton Woods institutions in order to sensitize them to the need to consult with the social partners on proposed programmes of structural adjustment.

Employment policies in a global context

The Programme and Budget 1998-99 provides for work on labour standards, structural adjustment and labour market indicators, in response to this resolution. Action taken by the ILO to assist governments in establishing an employment policy framework is discussed in Chapter 2 of this Report. In discussions with the IMF and World Bank, as well as in OECD and EU fora, the ILO has continued to stress the merits of programmes of economic reform which are based on consensus between the government and the social partners. This has also been highlighted in the report *World Employment 1996/97*. More specifically, as requested in the resolution, an expanded range of indicators of labour market performance has been developed and the required statistical information is being assembled for wider dissemination.

84th (MARITIME) SESSION (1996)

Application of the Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention, 1996

As requested in the resolution, draft guidelines and a standardized format on hours of work and rest have been prepared. In agreement with IMO, a joint IMO/ILO Working Group will meet in 1998 to consider a draft including all groups of seafarers covered by ILO Convention No. 180 and the IMO International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW).

IMO/STCW Convention of 1978, as amended, and the application of the Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention, 1996

The text of the resolution has been communicated to the Secretary-General of the IMO, as well as to ILO member States.

Application of revised Convention No. 9 to the fisheries sector

The Director-General has communicated the resolution to the governments of member States and, through them, to employers' and workers' organizations, drawing their attention to the promotion of the application of the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention, 1996 (No. 179), which revises the Placing of Seamen Convention, 1920 (No. 9), to fishermen following consultations between representative organizations of fishermen and fishing vessel owners and the competent authority. The Director-General has included in the work programme of the Sectoral Activities Department for 1998-99 a study on the issues raised in the resolution. The Governing Body has also decided to hold a sectoral meeting on safety and health in the fishing sector during the same biennium. One part of the report for the meeting will discuss standard-setting aspects.

The recruitment and placement of seafarers

The text of the resolution was communicated to the 85th Session of the International Labour Conference. Seafarers were excluded from the scope of the Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) adopted by that session of the Conference.

Inspection of seafarers' working and living conditions

Resources have been included in the programme and budget for 1998-99 for preparation of the revised code of practice on the inspection of labour conditions on board ship. A meeting of experts to discuss the revised Code will be proposed at a later stage.

ANNEX II

Appropriations and expenditure by major programme, 1996-97

The table below, which shows approved levels of expenditure and actual expenditure by major programme, is drawn from the *Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for the Sixty-fifth Financial Period (1996-97).*

Status of regular budget appropriations for the financial period 1996-97 (in US dollars)

Title	*Appropriations* [1]	*Reduced spending level* [2]	*Expenditure*
PART I — ORDINARY BUDGET			
10 International Labour Conference	15 815 671	16 224 271	11 340 614
20 Governing Body	2 766 718	2 766 718	2 202 522
30 Major regional meetings	3 253 264	444 000	241 039
40 General management	9 488 450	9 488 450	8 474 275
50 International labour standards and human rights	23 808 796	23 478 356	21 138 093
60 Employment and training	28 190 425	27 475 321	25 552 928
65 Enterprise and cooperative development	12 137 226	11 917 610	11 394 869
75 Turin Centre	5 130 000	5 130 000	5 130 000
80 Industrial relations and labour administration	12 803 716	12 596 612	11 386 367
85 Multinational enterprises	1 302 629	1 302 629	1 045 664
90 Working conditions and environment	20 384 037	19 958 076	19 032 115
100 Sectoral activities	17 672 696	14 182 696	11 129 302
110 Social security	8 269 579	8 154 102	7 463 068
115 International Social Security Association	724 600	0	
120 Statistics	9 035 080	8 795 256	7 590 587
125 Development policies	7 936 235	7 793 053	6 947 967
130 International Institute for Labour Studies	6 021 750	5 921 750	5 441 616
140 Equality for women	871 013	871 013	683 653
145 Interdepartmental activities	1 240 350	0	
160 Personnel	18 751 715	18 825 165	17 917 020
170 Financial services	15 406 385	15 306 385	14 759 259
175 Internal administration	46 608 340	43 536 323	41 810 199
180 Publications	9 238 340	7 807 523	7 640 253
185 Information technology and communications	15 552 272	15 552 272	14 218 694
190 Library and documentation	9 571 250	9 571 250	8 664 240
200 Programming and management	6 356 931	6 085 155	5 669 291
210 Legal services	3 224 768	3 224 768	2 681 558
220 Relations, meetings and document services	67 433 413	62 470 581	53 196 359
225 Employers' activities	5 805 717	5 549 652	4 944 073
230 Workers' activities	16 254 763	15 925 255	15 028 708

Title	Appropriations [1]	Reduced spending level [2]	Expenditure
235 Public information	6 243 077	6 196 077	5 010 384
240 International relations	4 417 068	4 417 068	3 649 253
245 Active partnership and technical cooperation	4 390 636	3 822 508	3 607 304
250 Field programmes in Africa	42 395 999	42 395 999	39 797 793
260 Field programmes in the Americas	37 403 162	37 403 162	34 231 475
265 Field programmes in Arab States	8 498 506	8 498 506	6 953 302
270 Field programmes in Asia and the Pacific	39 911 608	39 911 608	36 124 571
280 Field programmes in Europe and Central Asia	13 023 916	13 023 916	12 445 652
290 Other budgetary provisions	25 959 010	25 571 075	21 400 714
Adjustment for staff turnover	(4 674 111)	(4 674 111)	
TOTAL PART I	578 625 000	556 920 050	505 944 781
PART II — UNFORESEEN EXPENDITURE			
Unforeseen expenditure	875 000	875 000	
PART III — WORKING CAPITAL FUND			
Working Capital Fund			
TOTAL (PARTS I-III)	579 500 000	557 795 050	505 944 781
TOTAL 1994-95	466 510 000	466 510 000	425 071 658

[1] To improve the comparability of 1996-97 expenditure, appropriations have been adjusted between items to reflect the reorganization as presented in the 1998-99 budget and effected during 1996-97. The principal changes have been the merger of the former Employment (060) and Training (070) into a single department, Employment and Training (060); the transfer of the Printing and Typing programme and the Distribution sub-programme from Editorial and and Document Services (180) to Relations, Meetings and Document Services (220); and finally the merger of the Promotion of Technical Cooperation (125.3) and Active Partnership (245) into one single programme, Active Partnership and Technical Cooperation (245). [2] Taking into account the net adjustments to the Programme and Budget of US$21,704,950 as adopted by the Governing Body at its 264th Session (November 1995).

The document *Regular budget account and Working Capital Fund as at 31 December 1997* (GB.271/PFA/1) submitted to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee in March 1998 contained the following statements concerning the levels of expenditure by major programme:

> "6. Expenditure was $50.9 million lower than the budget, and this is due to three main factors:
> (a) decisions by the ICSC resulting in lower than anticipated cost increases for staff costs ($29.9 million);
> (b) improvements in efficiency, particularly with respect to the functioning of the International Labour Conference ($4.8 million); and service and support to meetings in general ($5.3 million);
> (c) the financial restrictions imposed during the first seven months of the biennium due to uncertainties prevailing regarding the receipt of contributions ($10.9 million).
>
> 7. With respect to staff costs, provision had been made in the budget for cost increases of 2.0 per cent in 1995 and 2.5 per cent in both 1996 and 1997 for Professional staff assigned to Geneva and for General Service staff. This provision was lower than the 3.0 per cent per annum inflation assumption agreed upon in common with other organizations of the United Nations system having headquarters or major offices in Geneva. During this period, the only increase in Geneva post adjustment rates was one of 0.96 per cent in July 1995. As for General Service staff, at its 264th Session (November 1995) [1] the Governing Body approved the recommendation of the ICSC on the implementation of a new salary scale, which resulted in a salary freeze for existing staff and a salary scale that was 7.4 per cent lower for new staff. These lower staff costs have been taken into account in the preparation of the 1998-99 programme and budget proposals, resulting in minimal provisions for increases in staff costs in the budget.
>
> 8. The savings under the Conference budget were largely a result of the reforms adopted by the Gov-

[1] GB.264/PFA/11.

erning Body which affected the three sessions in 1996-97, including the Maritime Session in October 1996. A significant part of the savings were carried over in the approved Programme and Budget for 1998-99, which shows a reduction in real terms for the two regular sessions of the Conference of some $2.8 million.

9. The savings realized under Major programme 220 (Relations, meetings and documentation) amounted to $5.3 million, principally due to reductions in staff, interpretation services and document distribution costs achieved through the use of more sophisticated computer methods for planning and production, revised working arrangements and other efficiencies. The savings achieved in 1996-97 are reflected in the significant reductions in the budget for 1998-99.

10. In order to safeguard the financial position of the Office the Director-General introduced a wide range of measures in 1995. These were in force for some seven months in the 1996-97 biennium, and their effects were felt throughout the biennium. They included restrictions on the filling of vacancies and the recruitment of short-term staff, the reduction of staff, and measures to encourage early retirement. However, everything possible was done to realize the outputs specifically indicated in the programme and budget for the biennium 1996-97, including in particular research projects and publications. In consequence, much of the effect of the financial restrictions concerned ongoing or recurrent activities. For example, fewer activities to promote Conventions other than those directly relating to fundamental workers' rights were carried out. In most technical fields and in the regional departments, RBTC expenditure did not recover from the six-month period of restraint at the beginning of the biennium. A number of activities at the regional and country levels had to be reduced in scope or could no longer be organized in the remaining part of the biennium, and had to be deferred or cancelled."

Further explanations were given by the representatives of the Director-General in the discussion in the Committee on 18 March 1998. The relevant paragraphs of the Report of the Committee (GB.271/10/1), adopted by the Governing Body on 27 March 1998, are reproduced below:

"24. The representative of the Director-General (the Treasurer and Financial Comptroller) said that the most important directive guiding the Director-General in the execution of the programme and budget was the very clear statement by the major contributors that programme expenditure should be adjusted to match the amount of income actually received. Under no circumstances should expenditure exceed this amount, notwithstanding the fact that the Financial Regulations authorized the Director-General to incur expenditure up to the full amount of the approved programme and budget irrespective of the receipt of income. There had been an understanding between the Office and the member States in recent years that expenditure should be managed in this way, even during periods of extremely difficult conditions. The Office had no control whatsoever over the timing and amounts of income receipts.

25. In every biennium except one in the last 12 years, the Director-General had been obliged to propose budgetary cuts and programme reductions to the Governing Body because of shortfalls in income. Ever since the beginning of 1986, in fact, the Office had been living in a climate of financial uncertainty. This had forced the Office to err on the side of prudence in its plans for programme expenditure but, as a previous speaker had said, it was difficult to reassure programme managers on the rare occasions when finances were back to normal.

26. The 1996-97 biennium began under very difficult circumstances as the United States representative had advised that full funding of the budget for that biennium should not be taken for granted. The Governing Body accordingly agreed to expenditure reductions totalling $21.7 million in November 1995 but it was not at all clear at the time whether this was too much or not enough. In the early part of 1996, the Director-General imposed further restraints under which programme expenditure was limited to 80 per cent of the total approved for the biennium. By mid-1996, the financial picture appeared to be brightening and the Director-General authorized programme managers to resume activities at the original level. However, a stop-start approach to project management not only wasted resources but also severely disrupted the programmes of the Organization. The Office had a duty to ensure not only that expenditure was incurred for approved purposes but also that it received value for money, otherwise it was better not to spend the money at all. This problem was more serious when programmes were interrupted and then resumed but it was preferable to be criticized for not spending than for spending unwisely.

27. The Treasurer then drew attention to paragraph 6 (a) of the Office paper, which mentioned savings of $29.9 million resulting from ICSC decisions which produced lower than anticipated cost increases for staff costs. In 1994, the Geneva-based agencies had met as instructed to agree assumptions on inflation, post adjustment movements and General Service salaries for the 1996-97 biennium. When the budget for that biennium was discussed at the June 1995 Conference, the Director-General informed the Finance Committee that, on the basis of new economic data, he was able to take the initiative to reduce cost increases by $7.6 million. Later that same year, in November, the Director-General informed the PFAC that the ICSC had frozen existing General Serv-

ice salaries for the foreseeable future and introduced a lower scale for new staff and that a provision of $6.5 million for GS salary increases would no longer be required. Why were these savings not immediately reallocated by the Governing Body? Because it was early in the biennium, and an ICSC recommendation for Professional salary increases had not been included in the budget. As it happened, that recommendation was later rejected by the General Assembly but these events clearly showed how difficult it could be to make accurate financial predictions. He emphasized that there was virtually no provision for increases in staff costs in the 1998-99 budget.

28. A number of speakers had referred to the question of flexibility for the reallocation of resources. The Director-General had no authority whatsoever to transfer funds from one major programme to another. Article 16 of the Financial Regulations provided that transfers within the same part of the expenditure budget were to be effected by special resolutions of the Governing Body. However, the usual practice in the Office was to discourage requests for additional funds, even for high priority activities, until approved allocations had been committed in full.

29. Finally, a number of speakers had referred to paragraph 6 (b) of the Office paper, which described savings in the functioning of the International Labour Conference and service and support to meetings in general. Although some activities had been reinstated, most of these savings in 1996-97 had been fully reflected in the Programme and Budget for 1998-99 which showed a programme decrease of $7.2 million alone for Major programme 220 (Relations, meetings and document services).

30. The representative of the Director-General (Director of the Bureau of Programming and Management) provided additional information concerning paragraph 6 (b). When the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference requested improvements in productivity during a biennium, it was essential to prepare for this in the previous biennium. The amounts in question were considerable and meant that measures had to be taken in time to achieve the planned savings.

31. As regards paragraph 6 (c), which concerned the financial restrictions imposed at the beginning of the biennium, he stated that the amount in question had represented some 2 per cent of the budget. Although this was only a small percentage, the Office regretted that it had been unable to achieve all it had undertaken to do. He confirmed that activities relating to standards and other departments had had to be abandoned, as remarked by Mr. Blondel. He explained that when programme implementation was delayed by six to seven months, certain activities could no longer be resumed."

ANNEX III

Expenditure on technical cooperation programmes, 1996-97 (excluding administrative expenditure)

By source of funding

Source of funds	*1996*		*1997*		*Total biennium*		*1997/96*
	$'000	*% share*	*$'000*	*% share*	*$'000*	*% share*	*% change*
Regular budget (RBTC)	6 958	7.1	17 749	16.4	24 707	12.0	155.1
UNDP [1]	23 531	24.0	31 225	28.8	54 756	26.5	32.7
Trust funds [2] and multi-bi [3]	61 059	62.2	54 023	49.9	115 082	55.7	–11.5
UNFPA [4]	6 619	6.7	5 366	5.0	11 985	5.8	–18.9
Total	98 167	100.0	108 363	100.0	206 530	100.0	10.4

[1] Including projects in which the ILO acts as an associated agency. ($6,682,465 for 1996; $7,855,449 for 1997). [2] Including (a) funds deposited by beneficiary governments; (b) reimbursable expenditure under programmes such as UNEP, UNICEF, UNHCR, etc; (c) development banks. [3] Multi-bilateral programmes, including associate expert programmes. [4] United Nations Population Fund.

By geographical region

Region	*1996*		*1997*		*Total biennium*		*1997/96*
	$'000	*% share*	*$'000*	*% share*	*$'000*	*% share*	*% change*
Africa	36 749	37.4	42 077	38.8	78 825	38.2	14.5
Americas	10 162	10.4	13 280	12.3	23 442	11.4	30.7
Arab States	2 625	2.7	4 083	3.8	6 708	3.2	55.5
Asia and the Pacific [1]	24 733	25.2	23 500	21.7	48 233	23.4	–5.0
Europe [2]	6 072	6.2	6 804	6.3	12 876	6.2	12.1
Interregional and global	17 827	18.2	18 619	17.2	36 446	17.6	4.4
Total	98 167	100.0	108 363	100.0	206 530	100.0	10.4

[1] Including Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. [2] Including Israel.

Expenditure by type of assistance, 1996-97

Type of assistance	*1996*		*1997*		*Total biennium*		*1997/96*
	$'000	*% share*	*$'000*	*% share*	*$'000*	*% share*	*% change*
Experts	35 700	36.4	32 217	29.7	67 916	32.9	–9.8
Other personnel [1]	26 417	26.9	28 693	26.5	55 110	26.7	8.6
Training [2]	16 256	16.6	22 686	20.9	38 942	18.9	39.5
Equipment	5 426	5.5	8 378	7.7	13 804	6.7	54.4
Subcontracting	9 202	9.4	9 260	8.5	18 461	8.9	0.6
Miscellaneous	5 166	5.3	7 131	6.6	12 297	6.0	38.0
Total	98 167	100.0	108 363	100.0	206 530	100.0	10.4

[1] National experts, external collaborators, locally recruited project staff, United Nations Volunteers and other staff costs. [2] Including principally fellowships, seminars and in-service training.

ANNEX IV

Expenditure on technical cooperation by field of activity and source of funds, 1996-97 (excluding administrative expenditure)

Field of activity	Expenditure 1996 (thousands of dollars)					Expenditure 1997 (thousands of dollars)					1996/97
	Regular budget	UNDP	UNFPA	Trust funds and multi-bi	Total 1996	Regular budget	UNDP	UNFPA	Trust funds and multi-bi	Total 1997	% change
Programme											
International labour standards											
Departmental management	98			388	486	543			341	884	
Application of standards	19			293	312	298			346	644	
Freedom of association	21				21	149				149	
Equality and human rights	11			408	418	174			615	789	
Labour law information	16			3	19	3			0	3	
	165			1 092	1 257	1 166			1 302	2 468	96.4
Employment and training											
Departmental management	2 025				2 025	4 843	13			4 856	
Vocational rehabilitation	58	624		2 741	3 423	236	970		2 163	3 370	
Technical cooperation	25	5 553		6 756	12 334	317	10 642		5 448	16 407	
	2 108	6 177		9 497	17 782	5 396	11 626		7 611	24 632	38.5
Enterprise and cooperative development											
Departmental management	342	123		913	1 377	926	615		1 107	2 648	
Entrepreneurship and management development	93	5 498		5 838	11 429	439	5 837		5 363	11 640	
Cooperatives	14	2 797		6 995	9 805	55	2 684		6 298	9 037	
Hotels and tourism	13	250		427	690	47	65		8	120	
	461	8 668		14 172	23 301	1 467	9 202		12 776	23 445	0.6
Industrial relations and labour administration											
Departmental management	399	97		71	566	801	76			878	
Labour law and labour relations	87	67		1 800	1 954	271	199		1 454	1 925	
Labour administration	16	96		2 028	2 141	157	97		1 857	2 110	
	502	260		3 899	4 662	1 229	373		3 311	4 913	5.4

Field of activity	Expenditure 1996 (thousands of dollars)					Expenditure 1997 (thousands of dollars)					1996/97
	Regular budget	UNDP	UNFPA	Trust funds and multi-bi	Total 1996	Regular budget	UNDP	UNFPA	Trust funds and multi-bi	Total 1997	% change
Working conditions and environment											
Departmental management [1]	105			8 648	8 753	558			9 201	9 759	
Occupational safety and health		70		1 546	1 616		(0)		1 259	1 259	
Conditions of work	31	226		649	906	63	9		352	425	
Safety and health information				869	869				418	418	
PIACT	314				314	1 243				1 243	
	450	296		11 712	12 458	1 865	9		11 230	13 104	5.2
Sectoral activities											
Departmental management	27				27	149				149	
Industrial activities	8			974	982	98			516	614	
Maritime industries	3	62		413	478	187	46		377	611	
Salaried employees					0	98				98	
	38	62		1 387	1 487	532	46		893	1 472	–1.0
Social security	357	528		1 227	2 112	636	733		873	2 242	6.2
Bureau of Statistics	92	16		294	401	175	110		279	565	40.7
Development policies	64	6 911	6 619	9 248	22 842	671	8 739	5 366	6 451	21 227	–7.1
Institute	7	100		49	157	103	1		41	144	–7.9
Employers' activities	545			1 160	1 705	1 311			1 329	2 640	54.9
Workers' activities	2 102	107		3 819	6 028	3 034	51		3 997	7 082	17.5
Miscellaneous [2]	67	407		3 502	3 975	164	336		3 929	4 430	11.4
Total ILO technical *cooperation programmes*	6 958	23 531	6 619	61 059	98 167	17 749	31 225	5 366	54 023	108 363	10.4

[1] Mostly incurred by IPEC. [2] Includes projects administered by regional offices, MDTs, etc., in various technical fields.

ANNEX V

Expenditure on technical cooperation by country and area and by source of funds, 1996-97 [1] (in thousands of dollars)

Country or territory	Regular budget	UNDP (executing agency)	UNDP (associated agency)	UNFPA	Trust funds	Total
Africa						
Regional	3 910	510	6	(3)	14 302	18 725
Algeria	13	40			0	53
Angola	27	1 478			(89)	1 416
Benin	76	10	97		162	344
Botswana	45	11		290	207	554
Burkina Faso	135	142			206	483
Burundi	8		27	150	(10)	174
Cameroon	131	214		46	377	767
Cape Verde	78	6		(4)	0	81
Central African Republic	36					36
Chad	54	774	674			1 502
Comoros	27	769		625		1 420
Congo	49				164	213
Côte d'Ivoire	179	4	97		692	972
Djibouti	22	(3)				20
Egypt	153	62			922	1 136
Equatorial Guinea	32					32
Eritrea	59				33	92
Ethiopia	244	0	14		1 219	1 477
Gabon	27	429			7	463
Gambia	25	203	26	17		270
Ghana	120	115	16		335	586
Guinea	75	128		281	590	1 074
Guinea-Bissau	39	18		21	3	80
Kenya	62	185			1 058	1 305
Lesotho	107	749			1 074	1 930
Liberia	11	764				775
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		1 859				1 859
Madagascar	138	2 993	790	935	1 985	6 840
Malawi	66	137	140	508	70	921
Mali	36	476	1 102	9	869	2 491
Mauritania	75	24	1 201		88	1 388
Mauritius	120	79	44			243
Morocco	54	44			134	232
Mozambique	82	3 318	429	258	88	4 175
Namibia	94	9		429	733	1 265

Country or territory	Regular budget	UNDP (executing agency)	UNDP (associated agency)	UNFPA	Trust funds	Total
Niger	81	883	88		1 918	2 969
Nigeria	125	(17)	288			397
Rwanda	51	467			5	523
Sao Tome and Principe	8		90	18		115
Senegal	174	327	21	0	481	1 003
Seychelles	61					61
Sierra Leone	36	107			1 630	1 773
Somalia		29				29
South Africa	119	410			2 810	3 339
Sudan	60	410	387	24	155	1 036
Swaziland	73				128	201
Tanzania, United Republic of	234	547			3 675	4 457
Togo	97	790				888
Tunisia	12				118	130
Uganda	81	95		609	1 076	1 861
Zaire	47	1 252			22	1 320
Zambia	54		631		756	1 441
Zimbabwe	102	(0)			1 785	1 887
Total	7 823	20 846	6 166	4 212	39 779	78 825
Americas						
Regional	2 594	231	391	24	8 256	11 496
Antigua and Barbuda	4					4
Argentina	143	31				174
Bahamas	10					10
Barbados	12					12
Belize	11					11
Bolivia	67	66	55		(18)	169
Brazil	275	3			1 325	1 603
Caribbean Islands	368	27	30		159	584
Chile	186				351	537
Colombia	122	290	50		87	549
Costa Rica	93				703	796
Cuba	56	94				151
Dominica	2				5	7
Dominican Republic	115					115
Ecuador	43	113				156
El Salvador	19					19
Grenada	7					7
Guatemala	20	12		80		112
Guyana	7	24				31
Haiti	35	1	1 005		11	1 052

Country or territory	Regular budget	UNDP (executing agency)	UNDP (associated agency)	UNFPA	Trust funds	Total
Honduras	18	139	52		1 426	1 635
Jamaica	29				5	34
Mexico	164	27			122	312
Netherlands Antilles	36					36
Nicaragua	25				1 533	1 557
Panama	41				55	96
Paraguay	63					63
Peru	159	217			531	907
Saint Helena		0				0
Saint Kitts and Nevis	3					3
Saint Lucia	3				17	19
Saint Vincent	4					4
Suriname	3	1				4
Trinidad and Tobago	12				585	598
Uruguay	85		0		210	294
Venezuela	55	230				285
Total	4 889	1 504	1 582	104	15 362	23 442
Arab States						
Regional, including occupied Arab territories	954	276			2 404	3 633
Bahrain	26	5	120			152
Iraq		291				291
Jordan	77	84				161
Kuwait	38	0			65	103
Lebanon	115	1 017				1 132
Oman	25					25
Qatar	31	17	3			52
Syrian Arab Republic	57	139				196
United Arab Emirates	12	28				40
Yemen	58	825	40			923
Total	1 392	2 684	164		2 468	6 708
Asia and the Pacific						
Regional	2 315	495	517	63	7 707	11 098
Afghanistan		6	20			26
Bangladesh	131	186	12	284	2 243	2 856
Bhutan		4				4
Cambodia	19	8 090	2 379		1 291	11 780
China	216	176	155	(0)	115	661
Cook Islands				1		1
Fiji	100	87		93	146	427

Country or territory	Regular budget	UNDP (executing agency)	UNDP (associated agency)	UNFPA	Trust funds	Total
India	408	9	45		2 564	3 026
Indonesia	212	727			1 246	2 185
Iran, Islamic Republic of	17	40				57
Japan	7					7
Kiribati			19			19
Korea, Republic of	5					5
Lao People's Democratic Republic	23	179	532		1 012	1 745
Malaysia	107	3	65			175
Maldives		97				97
Marshall Islands				19		19
Mongolia	63	125		17		205
Nepal	102	94	54		1 968	2 219
Niue		1				1
Pakistan	396	406	32	49	2 160	3 044
Papua New Guinea	10	831	651	395		1 886
Philippines	268	171	84		2 032	2 555
Solomon Islands		13	139	119		272
Sri Lanka	118	35	815		94	1 063
Thailand	134		262		1 870	2 265
Tokelau		5				5
Tonga		11	7	6		24
Vanuatu	1					1
Viet Nam	36	57	23		356	473
Western Samoa	5			23	2	30
Total	4 693	11 851	5 811	1 070	24 808	48 233
Europe						
Regional (including EEC)	694	5			2 476	3 175
Albania	7	15	230		497	750
Armenia		2				2
Azerbaijan	95	8	8			111
Baltic States	11	48				59
Belarus	10	104			137	250
Belgium					9	9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	56	1 591	139		434	2 220
Bulgaria	85	519	22			627
Croatia	30		271			300
Cyprus	4	6			31	41
Czech Republic	3		7		4	14
Estonia	18					18
Georgia	16		108			124
Hungary	53				422	475

Country or territory	Regular budget	UNDP (executing agency)	UNDP (associated agency)	UNFPA	Trust funds	Total
Israel	12					12
Kazakhstan	12	44	1		121	177
Kyrgyzstan	10	1				12
Latvia	6	30				36
Lithuania	12					12
Macedonia, former Yugoslav Rep. of	4					4
Moldova, Republic of	8	46				54
Netherlands *					78	78
Poland	17				692	709
Romania	112	45			(2)	155
Russian Federation	341	51			290	682
Slovakia	24					24
Slovenia	1					1
Spain *					49	49
Tajikistan	5					5
Turkey	36	115			1 841	1 992
Ukraine	111	98	17		101	328
United Kingdom *					1	1
Uzbekistan	13	350				363
Yugoslavia	8					8
Total	1 814	3 079	804		7 180	12 876
Interregional	4 097	254	11	6 599	25 484	36 446
Total	**24 707**	**40 218**	**14 538**	**11 985**	**115 082**	**206 530**

* For beneficiaries from several developing countries.

[1] Not including administrative expenses. Negative figures (in brackets) indicate previous year adjustments.

ANNEX VI

Meetings held in 1996-97 *

In line with the programme and budget adjustments for 1996-97, the Governing Body decided at its 264th Session (November 1995) to replace regional conferences with a three-day regional meeting to be held in a different region each year and to reduce the number of sectoral meetings planned for 1996-97 from 16 to ten and that of technical meetings from seven to five. The planned International Symposium on Protection Against Sexual Harassment at Work was accordingly cancelled and two other technical meetings postponed: the Meeting on Globalization and Liberalization and Employers' Organizations and the International Symposium on Trade Unions and the Informal Sector, which is now scheduled for 1999.

The Tripartite Meeting of Export Processing Zones — Operating Countries was postponed to 1998, as there was not enough time to organize it properly during the biennium 1996-97. Lastly, the Meetings of Experts on Statistics of Income from Employment and the Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics of the Measurement of Underemployment were merged into a single meeting: the Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics, which was held in October 1997.

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* The list of meetings is presented in the same order as that contained in *Information Annex No. 8* of the Programme and Budget for 1996-97. All the meetings were held in Geneva unless otherwise stated.

Title	*Programme*	*Place and date of meeting*
Major advisory meetings		
84th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference [1]	10.2	8-22 October 1996
Regional meeting	30	
12th Regional Asian Meeting		Bangkok, 9-11 December 1997
Sectoral meetings	100.6	
Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Issues Concerning Migrant Workers in the Construction Industry [2]		4-8 March 1996
Joint Meeting on the Impact of Structural Adjustment on Educational Personnel [2,3]		22-26 April 1996
Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Problems Caused by Structural Adjustments in the Port Industry [2]		20-24 May 1996
Tripartite Meeting on Improving the Conditions of Employment and Work of Agricultural Wage Workers in the Context of Economic Restructuring		23-27 September 1996
Tripartite Meeting on the Globalization of the Footwear, Textiles and Clothing Industries: Effects on Employment and Working Conditions [4]		28 October-1 November 1996
Symposium on Multimedia Convergence		27-29 January 1997
Tripartite Meeting on the Effects of New Technologies on Employment and Working Conditions in the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Sector		12-16 May 1997
Meeting of Experts on Safety and Health in Forest Work		23-30 September 1997
Tripartite Meeting on the Iron and Steel Workforce of the Twenty-first Century: What it will be like and how it will work		27-31 October 1997
Tripartite Meeting on Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management		15-19 December 1997

Title	Programme	Place and date of meeting
Other meetings		
Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations	50.2	28 November-13 December 1996 27 November-12 December 1997
Meeting of Experts on Workers' Privacy [2]	90.4	1-7 October 1996
Joint Maritime Commission (28th Session)		22 October 1996
ILO Enterprise Forum		8-9 November 1996
Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Future ILO Activities in the Field of Migration	60.4	21-25 April 1997
Meeting of Experts on Workers' Health Surveillance	90.2	2-9 September 1997
Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (CEART)		Paris, 15-19 September 1997
Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics [2]	120	14-23 October 1997
ILO/WHO Consultation on Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers		25-27 November 1997

[1] In line with the programme and budget adjustments adopted by the Governing Body at its 263rd Session (June 1995), the Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference, initially scheduled for January 1996, had been postponed. [2] One of the five meetings initially scheduled for 1995 which the Governing Body had decided at its 263rd Session (June 1995) to postpone to a later date. [3] At its 264th Session (November 1995) the Governing Body had decided that the Standing Technical Committee for Educational Personnel would henceforth be entitled Joint Meeting on the Impact of Structural Adjustment on Educational Personnel. [4] At its 259th Session (March 1994) the Governing Body had decided to postpone this meeting, initially planned for the biennium 1994-95, to 1996.

ANNEX VII

New priced publications issued in 1996-97

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE, GENEVA

Accident prevention on board ship at sea and in port: An ILO code of practice. Second (revised) edition (in English, French and Spanish).

Affirmative action in the employment of ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities, edited by J. Hodges-Aeberhard and C. Raskin (in English).

Children at work: Health and safety risks, by V. Forastieri. ILO Child Labour Collection (in English).

Combining work and elder care: A challenge for now and the future, edited by L. Hoskins (in English).

La conception, le suivi et l'évaluation des programmes et des projets de coopération technique. Manuel de formation (in French and Spanish).

The cost of social security: Fourteenth international inquiry, 1987-89 (trilingual).

Droit syndical de l'OIT: Normes et procédures (in French).

Les églises protestantes et la question sociale. Positions œcuméniques sur la justice sociale et le monde du travail, by L. Christiaens, s.j., and F. Dermange (in French).

Employing foreign workers: A manual on policies and procedures of special interest to middle- and low-income countries, by W. R. Böhning (in English).

Employment policies and programmes in Central and Eastern Europe, edited by M. Godfrey and P. Richards (in English).

Encyclopaedia of occupational health and safety. Fourth edition, Vols. 1, 2 and 3, edited by J. M. Stellman (in English).

Ergonomic checkpoints: Practical and easy-to-implement solutions for improving safety, health and working conditions (in English).

Freedom of association: Digest of decisions and principles of the Freedom of Association Committee of the Governing Body of the ILO. Fourth (revised) edition (in English, French and Spanish).

International labour Conventions and Recommendations 1919-1995. Set of three volumes (in English).

International migration statistics: Guidelines for improving data collection systems, by R. E. Bilsborrow, G. Hugo, A. S. Oberai and H. Zlotnik (in English).

Introduction à l'étude du travail. Third edition, edited by G. Kanawaty (in French and Spanish).

Lessons from privatization: Labour issues in developing and transitional countries, edited by R. Van der Hoeven and G. Sziraczki (in English).

Management of alcohol- and drug-related issues in the workplace: An ILO code of practice (in English, French and Spanish).

Management consulting: A guide to the profession. Third (revised) edition, edited by M. Kubr (in English and Spanish).

More and better jobs for women: An action guide. An ILO follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development, by Lin Lean Lim (in English).

Productivity and quality management: A modular programme, edited by J. Prokopenko and K. North (copublication with the Asian Productivity Organization) (in English).

Protection of workers' personal data: An ILO code of practice (in English, French and Spanish).

Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases: An ILO code of practice (in English, French and Spanish).

Restructuring the labour market: The South African challenge. An ILO country review, by G. Standing, J. Sender and J. Weeks (in English).

Rural women in micro-enterprise development: A training manual and programme for extension workers (in English).

Sending workers abroad: A manual for low- and middle-income countries, by M. Abella (in English).

Statistics on occupational wages and hours of work and on food prices: October Inquiry results 1994-95 (trilingual).

Statistics on occupational wages and hours of work and on food prices: October Inquiry results 1995-96 (trilingual).

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Series

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Vol. 14: *1996, Working time around the world* (in English).

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No. 77: *Export processing zones in the Philippines: A review of employment, working conditions and labour relations*, by E. M. Remedio (in English).

No. 78: *Technological and regulatory changes affecting multinational enterprises in telecommunications: Aspects of the impact on the workforce*, by R. Mansell and P. Tang (in English).

No. 79: *Women workers and working conditions in retailing: A comparative study of the situation in a foreign-controlled retail enterprise and a nationally owned retailer in Canada*, by I. U. Zeytinoğlu and M. Cook (in English).

No. 80: *Export processing zones in Bangladesh: Economic impact and social issues*, by D. Bhattacharya (in English).

No. 81: *Multinational enterprises in the courier service industry: Aspects of employment and working conditions in selected enterprises* (in English).

Improve Your Construction Business

No. 2: *Site management* (handbook and workbook), by C.-A. Andersson, D. Miles, R. H. Neale and J. Ward (in English).

No. 3: *Business management* (handbook and workbook), by C.-A. Andersson, D. Miles and J. Ward (in English).

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No. 7: *Managing international construction projects: An overview*, edited by R. Neale (in English).

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No. 30: *Environmental business management: An introduction*. Second (revised) edition, by K. North (in English).

No. 31: *Cómo seleccionar y trabajar con consultores. Guía para el cliente*, by M. Kubr (in Spanish; English and French editions already published).

No. 33: *Localizing global production: Know-how transfer in international manufacturing*, by K. North and J. Prokopenko (in English).

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Breaking through the glass ceiling: Women in management. Report for discussion, 1997 (in English, French and Spanish).

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International Institute for Labour Studies

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No. 103: *Local and regional response to global pressure: The case of Italy and its industrial districts*, by F. Cossentino, F. Pyke and W. Sengenberger (in English).

No. 104: *Social exclusion and inequality in Peru*, by A. Figueroa, T. Altamirano and D. Sulmont (in English and Spanish: see also ILO Regional Office, Lima).

No. 105: *Goals for social integration and realities of social exclusion in the Republic of Yemen*, by M. H. Hashem (in English).

No. 106: *Social exclusion from a welfare rights perspective in India*, by P. Appasamy et al. (in English).

No. 107: *Challenging social exclusion: Rights and livelihood in Thailand*, by P. Phongpaichit et al. (in English).

No. 108: *Economic transition and social exclusion in Russia*, by N. Tchernina (in English).

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ILO-CEET, Budapest

Privatization surprises in transition economies: see below, "Published under licensing agreements with external publishers".

BIT-ACOPAM, Dakar

Genre et développement: Analyse de la place des femmes. Une expérience au Sahel (in French).

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Capacitación productiva y acción comunitaria: Un enfoque integrador, by V. Matamoro (in Spanish).

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ANNEX VIII

States Members of the ILO at 30 January 1998 (174)

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Iraq
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